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THE MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN

AND

CROTCHET CASTLE

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THE MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN

AND

CROTCHET CASTLE

BY

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

R. W. CHAPMAN

PR
5162
.M5
1924

HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
London Edinburgh Glasgow Copenhagen
New York Toronto Melbourne Cape Town
Bombay Calcutta Madras Shanghai

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

Born, Weymouth, Dorset . . 18 October 1785
Died, Halliford, Middlesex . . 23 January 1866

'The Misfortunes of Elphin' was first published in 1829; *'Crotchet Castle' in* 1831. *In the 'World's Classics' they were first published, in one volume, in* 1924.

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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Love Peacock was born in 1785, and died in 1866. He was seven years older than his friend Shelley; and his last novel was published a year later than *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.* Thus his influence, though slight, is traceable in the literature of two generations. He was never a star of the first magnitude; but he belonged to no constellation. His independence and detachment, which contributed to his obscurity while he lived, enhance his importance for the literary historian. He shines by his own light, which does not grow dimmer.

Peacock's father died when he was three years old, and his boyhood was spent in the country with his mother, who was devoted to the study of Gibbon, and his grandfather, a retired naval officer with one leg, who seems to have loved song and hated water-drinkers. In his Surrey home the boy learned the habits of walking and reading which distinguished his desultory youth. At the age of fourteen he gave proof of what was then called 'genius' by answering in solemn verse the question, 'Is History or Biography the more improving Study?' This effort won a special prize in a competition in which Leigh

Hunt was placed fourth; and it was published by the promoters of *The Juvenile Library*.

Mrs. Peacock must have possessed a slender competence. For though we hear of her son as clerk to a London merchant at a tender age, and as secretary to a naval officer for a short space in his early twenties, he was able to resign these uncongenial employments after brief experiment. Almost the whole of his youth was in his own disposal. He spent his summers in the country, reading, writing, and rambling; his winters in London, reading, writing, and talking. He read widely in classical literature, in French and in Italian. Before he was thirty he had published three volumes of verse—a rhapsodical poem on the ruins of Palmyra, full of apostrophes and capital letters; a topographical poem on the Thames; and a philosophical poem on Melancholy, printed in a handsome quarto with the proper appurtenances of notes and 'analysis'. These early efforts are not much remembered; but it should be recorded that Shelley at twenty declared the conclusion of *Palmyra*—that is of the second and revised edition of that poem, published when Peacock was twenty-seven—to be 'the finest piece of poetry he ever read'. Six years later Peacock published his last, and his most ambitious, volume of verse, *Rhododaphne, or the Thessalian Spell*, a romantic tale 'of classical mystery and

magic', written in irregularly rhyming octosyllabics. *Rhododaphne* has many graceful passages, but is hardly better known than its predecessors, though Shelley reviewed it in glowing language.

But some years before Peacock published his last volume of serious verse, he had found his true element; had worked at comedies (which he did not publish) and had completed the first of his series of satirical novels. This was *Headlong Hall*, which was published in December 1815. It was followed by *Melincourt*, *Nightmare Abbey* (both 1817), and *Maid Marian* (1822). Later came *The Misfortunes of Elphin* (1829) and *Crotchet Castle* (1831). The characteristics of these books need not be described; they are all excellently represented by the specimens here given. It will be noticed that these are very short. Their fellows, with one exception, are no longer. At a time when most novels were in three volumes, and some were in four, Peacock was content with one, and that a little one, with a small quantity of large type to a small page. Only once—in *Melincourt*—did he try to fill the conventional three volumes; and the result was not very successful. His other fictions we should call *novelettes*, if the word were respectable. *Tales* will not do, except for *Maid Marian*; for it suggests something of which the essence is narrative.

Peacock himself, when he wrote the preface to the collected edition of 1837, was content to speak of 'these publications'.

In 1812 Peacock made the acquaintance of Shelley; and the friendship which followed is the thing which to-day makes Peacock most generally interesting. The two men were much together in the last five years of Shelley's life in England. They had many tastes in common, and their characters were in many ways wholly dissimilar; it cannot be doubted that they did each other a great deal of good. That Shelley allowed Peacock sometimes to laugh at him, is proved by his liking *Nightmare Abbey*, though its hero was an unmistakable caricature of himself; and that Peacock was worthy to be the friend of such a man is shown by his *Memoirs of Shelley*, written many years later, which are as full of sympathy as they are free from bias.

Peacock said good-bye to Shelley in March 1818. In the following January he accepted a probationary appointment at the India House. This soon became permanent, and he was for nearly forty years a busy and successful civil servant. His married life extended over approximately the same period. Neither of these changes caused him to abandon literature. He finished *Maid Marian*, and later, in his forties, he wrote the two books which are here reprinted. But his

activity naturally slackened, and in time dwindled to an occasional article. After his retirement it revived; and at the age of seventy-five he performed the astonishing feat of producing a novel, the characters and incidents of which even his admirers sometimes confuse with those of its predecessors, written thirty and forty years earlier. But the author of *Gryll Grange* had formed his tastes and opinions early, and had not changed them. The theme of the preface of 1837, already mentioned, is that there was no occasion to change them. He there notices that certain material things have changed—'the Holyhead mail no longer keeps the same hours'; but that 'tastes, feelings and opinions remain substantially the same. Perfectibilians, deteriorationists, statu-quoites, phrenologists, political economists, theorists in all sciences, projectors in all arts, morbid visionaries, romantic enthusiasts, lovers of music, lovers of the picturesque, and lovers of good dinners, march, and will march for ever, *pari passu* with the march of mechanics, which some facetiously call the march of intellect. The fastidious in old wine are a race that does not decay.'

That Peacock is a classic now needs no proof; he has passed his century, and his reputation grows. That he is, or that he will be, or that he ought to be, a popular classic, can be proved only

by the success of experiments like the present. It has long been a commonplace of criticism that Peacock is one of those writers of whom the recommendation is either useless or superfluous. There are no obstacles to the enjoyment of him except such as, being inherent in a reader's temperament, it is idle to seek to remove. 'By God 'tis good, and if you like it you may.'

Yet the most natural happenings have sometimes surprising causes; and it seems proper to relate that the stimulus to this enterprise was the initiative of the Snowdon Mountain Tramroad and Hotels Co., Ltd.; the management of which, being desirous to provide holiday reading for visitors to the Principality, made the welcome suggestion that *The Misfortunes of Elphin* should be included in the series of *World's Classics*; and when it was pointed out that this would hardly make such a volume as the public expects for two shillings, resourcefully added that there is a Welsh episode in *Crotchet Castle*. This is why these two novels are now for the first time combined in one volume. To some Peacockians any combination is likely to be repugnant; they enjoy him best in his original dress, each novel in its separate slimness and—for choice—'untrimmed', in its chaste boards. But the volumes are *very* slim; and as Johnson said in defence of his purchase, at Inverness, of *Cocker's Arithmetick*, 'when you have read through a book

of entertainment, you know it, and it can do no more for you' while that holiday lasts. Besides, it is dangerous to carry original boards up Snowdon, or to leave them lying about in hotels.

The combination, therefore, is at least convenient. But if I may venture into that kind of critical appreciation which I have just deprecated, I would suggest that it is even felicitous. The Welsh connexion of *Elphin* and *Crotchet Castle* is not an accidental but an essential connexion; and it is easy to see why this is so. It was in Wales that Peacock met his love. It was to Wales that, eight years later, he addressed the remarkable letter which made her his wife:

It is more than eight years since I had the happiness of seeing you: I can scarcely hope that you have remembered me as I have remembered you; yet I feel confident that the simplicity and ingenuousness of your disposition will prompt you to answer me with the same candor with which I write to you. I long entertained the hopes of returning to Merionethshire under better auspices than those under which I left it; but fortune always disappointed me, continually offering me prospects which receded as I approached them. Recently she has made amends for her past unkindness, and has given me much present good, and much promise of progressive prosperity, which leaves me nothing to desire in worldly advantage but to participate it with you. The greatest blessing this world could bestow on me would be

to make you my wife: consider if your own feelings would allow you to constitute my happiness. I desire only to promote yours; and I desire only you: for your value is beyond fortune, of which I want no more than I have. The same circumstances which have given me prosperity confine me to London, and to the duties of the department with which the East India Company has entrusted me; yet I can absent myself for a few days once in every year: if you sanction my wishes, with what delight should I employ them in bringing you to my home! If this be but a baseless dream: if I am even no more in your estimation than the sands on the seashore—yet I am sure, as I have already said, that you will answer me with the same candor with which I have written. Whatever may be your sentiments, the feelings with which I now write to you, and which more than eight years of absence and silence have neither obliterated nor diminished, will convince you that I never can be otherwise than most sincerely and affectionately your friend

T. L. Peacock.

Bearing this in mind, and exercising a degree of imagination, we shall not find it surprising that a Welsh dingle is the scene of Mr. Chainmail's romantic education.

'The lady had lost her hat; and, as she turned towards Mr. Chainmail, in speaking to him, there was no envious projection of brim to intercept the beams of those radiant eyes he had been so anxious to see unclosed. There was in them

a mixture of softness and brilliancy, the perfection of the beauty of female eyes, such as some men have passed through life without seeing, and such as no man ever saw, in any pair of eyes, but once; such as can never be seen and forgotten.'

The same clue may lead us to the secret of *Elphin*. Peacock's novels have many amiable qualities, and are full of surprises. But only one of them can, without extravagance, be called simply beautiful. How *Elphin* achieves this distinction is not immediately apparent. The story is rollicking farce; it is full of drunkenness and baseness and low cunning; and its indubitable hero is Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, prince of drunkards and negligent warders. But Seithenyn and his peers, admirable and delightful in themselves, serve also, by their gross wit, to set off slighter and more ideal figures, whose names we do not remember, but who linger in our fancy, insubstantial symbols of youth and health and bravery and the bloom of young desire. We think of the elderly persons of this absurd drama as, for the most part, sedentary if not recumbent, while they enunciate paradox and cynicism with drunken solemnity. Their more agile sons and daughters breathe the purer air of the mountains, poised on Welsh rocks or bounding lightly across Welsh cataracts.

It need hardly be said that this is not the

place, and the present editor not the man, to attempt any investigation of Peacock's use of his Welsh sources. He was every inch a scholar, and there is no doubt about his Greek; but the amount of his knowledge of Welsh seems to be as yet obscure. I make the respectful suggestion that it is for the Welsh Universities to clear up this matter, to correct Peacock's spelling if it needs correction, and perhaps to vindicate the claim of Seithenyn, Prince Seithenyn, Seithenyn ap Seithin Saidi, Arglwyd Gorwarcheidwad yr Argae Breninawl, to have survived the inundation of Gwaelod.

R. W. CHAPMAN

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THE MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN

Quod non exspectes ex transverso fit.
Et suprà nos Fortuna negotia curat:
Quare da nobis vina Falerna, puer.

PETRONIUS ARBITER.

Unlooked-for good betides us still,
And unanticipated ill:
Blind Fortune rules the hours that roll:
Then fill with good old wine the bowl.

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THE

MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN

CHAPTER I

THE PROSPERITY OF GWAELOD

Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.
GRAY.

In the beginning of the sixth century, when Uther Pendragon held the nominal sovereignty of Britain over a number of petty kings, Gwythno Garanhir was king of Caredigion. The most valuable portion of his dominions was the Great Plain of Gwaelod, an extensive tract of level land, stretching along that part of the sea-coast which now belongs to the counties of Merioneth and Cardigan. This district was populous and highly cultivated. It contained sixteen fortified towns, superior to all the towns and cities of the Cymry, excepting Caer Lleon upon Usk; and, like Caer Lleon, they bore in their architecture, their language, and their manners, vestiges of past intercourse with the Roman lords of the world. It contained also one of the three privileged ports of the isle of Britain, which was called the Port of Gwythno. This port, we may believe if we please, had not been unknown to the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, when they visited the island for metal, accommodating the inhabitants, in return, with luxuries which they would not otherwise have

dreamed of, and which they could very well have done without; of course, in arranging the exchange of what they denominated equivalents, imposing on their simplicity, and taking advantage of their ignorance, according to the approved practice of civilized nations; which they called imparting the blessings of Phœnician and Carthaginian light.

An embankment of massy stone protected this lowland country from the sea, which was said, in traditions older than the embankment, to have, in occasional spring-tides, paid short but unwelcome visits to the interior inhabitants, and to have, by slow aggressions, encroached considerably on the land. To prevent the repetition of the first of these inconveniences, and to check the progress of the second, the people of Gwaelod had built the stony rampart, which had withstood the shock of the waves for centuries, when Gwythno began his reign.

Gwythno, like other kings, found the business of governing too light a matter to fill up the vacancy of either his time or his head, and took to the more solid pursuits of harping and singing; not forgetting feasting, in which he was glorious; nor hunting, wherein he was mighty. His several pursuits composed a very harmonious triad. The chace conduced to the good cheer of the feast, and to the good appetite which consumed it; the feast inspired the song; and the song gladdened the feast, and celebrated the chace.

Gwythno and his subjects went on together very happily. They had little to do with him but to pay him revenue, and he had little to do with them but to receive it. Now and then they were called on to fight for the protection of his sacred person,

and for the privilege of paying revenue to him rather than to any of the kings in his vicinity, a privilege of which they were particularly tenacious. His lands being far more fertile, and his people, consequently, far more numerous, than those of the rocky dwellers on his borders, he was always victorious in the defensive warfare to which he restricted his military achievements; and, after the invaders of his dominions had received two or three inflictions of signal chastisement, they limited their aggressions to coming quietly in the night, and vanishing, before morning, with cattle: an heroic operation, in which the pre-eminent glory of Scotland renders the similar exploits of other nations not worth recording.

Gwythno was not fond of the sea: a moonstruck bard had warned him to beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy;[1] and he thought he could best do so by keeping as far as possible out of her way. He had a palace built of choice slate stone on the rocky banks of the Mawddach, just above the point where it quitted its native mountains, and entered the Plain of Gwaelod. Here, among green woods and sparkling waters, he lived in festal munificence, and expended his revenue in encouraging agriculture, by consuming a large quantity of produce.

Watchtowers were erected along the embankment, and watchmen were appointed to guard against the first approaches of damage or decay. The whole of these towers, and their companies of guards, were subordinate to a central castle, which commanded the sea-port already mentioned, and

[1] *Gwen-hudiw*, 'the white alluring one:' the name of a mermaid. Used figuratively for the elemental power of the sea.

wherein dwelt Prince Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, who held the office of Arglwyd Gorwarcheidwad yr Argae Breninawl, which signifies, in English, Lord High Commissioner of Royal Embankment; and he executed it as a personage so denominated might be expected to do: he drank the profits, and left the embankment to his deputies, who left it to their assistants, who left it to itself.

The condition of the head, in a composite as in a simple body, affects the entire organization to the extremity of the tail, excepting that, as the tail in the figurative body usually receives the largest share in the distribution of punishment, and the smallest in the distribution of reward, it has the stronger stimulus to ward off evil, and the smaller supply of means to indulge in diversion; and it sometimes happens that one of the least regarded of the component parts of the said tail will, from a pure sense of duty, or an inveterate love of business, or an oppressive sense of ennui, or a development of the organ of order, or some other equally cogent reason, cheerfully undergo all the care and labour, of which the honour and profit will redound to higher quarters.

Such a component portion of the Gwaelod High Commission of Royal Embankment was Teithrin ap Tathral, who had the charge of a watchtower where the embankment terminated at the point of Mochres, in the high land of Ardudwy. Teithrin kept his portion of the embankment in exemplary condition, and paced with daily care the limits of his charge; but one day, by some accident, he strayed beyond them, and observed symptoms of neglect that filled him with dismay. This circumstance induced him to proceed till his wanderings

brought him round to the embankment's southern termination in the high land of Caredigion. He met with abundant hospitality at the towers of his colleagues, and at the castle of Seithenyn: he was supposed to be walking for his amusement; he was asked no questions, and he carefully abstained from asking any. He examined and observed in silence; and, when he had completed his observations, he hastened to the palace of Gwythno.

Preparations were making for a high festival, and Gwythno was composing an ode. Teithrin knew better than to interrupt him in his *awen*.[1]

Gwythno had a son named Elphin, who is celebrated in history as the most expert of fishers. Teithrin, finding the king impracticable, went in search of the young prince.

Elphin had been all the morning fishing in the Mawddach, in a spot where the river, having quitted the mountains and not yet entered the plain, ran in alternate streams and pools sparkling through a pastoral valley. Elphin sat under an ancient ash, enjoying the calm brightness of an autumnal noon, and the melody and beauty of the flying stream, on which the shifting sunbeams fell chequering through the leaves. The monotonous music of the river, and the profound stillness of the air, had contributed to the deep abstraction of a meditation into which Elphin had fallen. He was startled into attention by a sudden rush of the wind through the trees, and during the brief interval of transition from the state of reverie to that of perfect consciousness, he heard, or seemed to hear, in the gust that hurried by him,

[1] The rapturous and abstracted state of poetical inspiration.

the repetition of the words, 'Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy.' The gust was momentary: the leaves ceased to rustle, and the deep silence of nature returned.

The prophecy, which had long haunted the memory and imagination of his father, had been often repeated to Elphin, and had sometimes occupied his thoughts, but it had formed no part of his recent meditation, and he could not persuade himself that the words had not been actually spoken near him. He emerged from the shade of the trees that fringed the river, and looked round him from the rocky bank.

At this moment Teithrin ap Tathral discovered and approached him.

Elphin knew him not, and inquired his name. He answered, 'Teithrin ap Tathral.'

'And what seek you here?' said Elphin.

'I seek,' answered Teithrin, 'the Prince of Gwaelod, Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir.'

'You spoke,' said Elphin, 'as you approached.' Teithrin answered in the negative.

'Assuredly you did,' said Elphin. 'You repeated the words, "Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy."'

Teithrin denied having spoken the words; but their mysterious impression made Elphin listen readily to his information and advice; and the result of their conference was a determination, on the part of the Prince, to accompany Teithrin ap Tathral on a visit of remonstrance to the Lord High Commissioner.

They crossed the centre of the enclosed country to the privileged port of Gwythno, near which stood the castle of Seithenyn. They walked

towards the castle along a portion of the embankment, and Teithrin pointed out to the Prince its dilapidated condition. The sea shone with the glory of the setting sun; the air was calm; and the white surf, tinged with the crimson of sunset, broke lightly on the sands below. Elphin turned his eyes from the dazzling splendor of ocean to the green meadows of the Plain of Gwaelod; the trees, that in the distance thickened into woods; the wreaths of smoke rising from among them, marking the solitary cottages, or the populous towns; the massy barrier of mountains beyond, with the forest rising from their base; the precipices frowning over the forest; and the clouds resting on their summits, reddened with the reflection of the west. Elphin gazed earnestly on the peopled plain, reposing in the calm of evening between the mountains and the sea, and thought, with deep feelings of secret pain, how much of life and human happiness was intrusted to the ruinous mound on which he stood.

CHAPTER II

THE DRUNKENNESS OF SEITHENYN

The three immortal drunkards of the isle of Britain: Ceraint of Essyllwg; Gwrtheyrn Gwrthenau; and Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi.

TRIADS OF THE ISLE OF BRITAIN.

THE sun had sunk beneath the waves when they reached the castle of Seithenyn. The sound of the harp and the song saluted them as they approached it. As they entered the great hall, which was already blazing with torchlight, they found his highness, and his highness's household, convincing

themselves and each other with wine and wassail, of the excellence of their system of virtual superintendence; and the following jovial chorus broke on the ears of the visitors:

THE CIRCLING OF THE MEAD-HORNS

Fill the blue horn, the blue buffalo horn:
Natural is mead in the buffalo horn:
As the cuckoo in spring, as the lark in the morn,
So natural is mead in the buffalo horn.

As the cup of the flower to the bee when he sips,
Is the full cup of mead to the true Briton's lips:
From the flower-cups of summer, on field and on tree,
Our mead cups are filled by the vintager bee.

Seithenyn [1] ap Seithyn, the generous, the bold,
Drinks the wine of the stranger from vessels of gold; [2]
But we from the horn, the blue silver-rimmed horn,
Drink the ale and the mead in our fields that were born.

The ale-froth is white, and the mead sparkles bright;
They both smile apart, and with smiles they unite: [3]
The mead from the flower, and the ale from the corn,
Smile, sparkle, and sing in the buffalo horn.

The horn, the blue horn, cannot stand on its tip;
Its path is right on from the hand to the lip:
Though the bowl and the wine-cup our tables adorn,
More natural the draught from the buffalo horn.

But Seithenyn ap Seithyn, the generous, the bold,
Drinks the bright-flowing wine from the far-gleaming gold:
The wine, in the bowl by his lip that is worn,
Shall be glorious as mead in the buffalo horn.

The horns circle fast, but their fountains will last,
As the stream passes ever, and never is past:
Exhausted so quickly, replenished so soon,
They wax and they wane like the horns of the moon.

[1] The accent is on the second syllable: Seithényn.

[2] Gwin . . . . o eur . . . . ANEURIN.

[3] The mixture of ale and mead made *bradawd*, a favorite drink of the Ancient Britons.

Fill high the blue horn, the blue buffalo horn;
Fill high the long silver-rimmed buffalo horn:
While the roof of the hall by our chorus is torn,
Fill, fill to the brim, the deep silver-rimmed horn.

Elphin and Teithrin stood some time on the floor of the hall before they attracted the attention of Seithenyn, who, during the chorus, was tossing and flourishing his golden goblet. The chorus had scarcely ended when he noticed them, and immediately roared aloud, 'You are welcome all four.'

Elphin answered, 'We thank you: we are but two.'

'Two or four,' said Seithenyn, 'all is one. You are welcome all. When a stranger enters, the custom in other places is to begin by washing his feet. My custom is, to begin by washing his throat. Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi bids you welcome.'

Elphin, taking the wine-cup, answered, 'Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir thanks you.'

Seithenyn started up. He endeavoured to straighten himself into perpendicularity, and to stand steadily on his legs. He accomplished half his object by stiffening all his joints but those of his ancles, and from these the rest of his body vibrated upwards with the inflexibility of a bar. After thus oscillating for a time, like an inverted pendulum, finding that the attention requisite to preserve his rigidity absorbed all he could collect of his dissipated energies, and that he required a portion of them for the management of his voice, which he felt a dizzy desire to wield with peculiar steadiness in the presence of the son of the king, he suddenly relaxed the muscles that perform the operation of sitting, and dropped into his chair like a plummet. He then, with a gracious gesticulation,

invited Prince Elphin to take his seat on his right hand, and proceeded to compose himself into a dignified attitude, throwing his body back into the left corner of his chair, resting his left elbow on its arm and his left cheekbone on the middle of the back of his left hand, placing his left foot on a footstool, and stretching out his right leg as straight and as far as his position allowed. He had thus his right hand at liberty, for the ornament of his eloquence and the conduct of his liquor.

Elphin seated himself at the right hand of Seithenyn. Teithrin remained at the end of the hall: on which Seithenyn exclaimed, 'Come on, man, come on. What, if you be not the son of a king, you are the guest of Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi. The most honourable place to the most honourable guest, and the next most honourable place to the next most honourable guest; the least honourable guest above the most honourable inmate; and, where there are but two guests, be the most honourable who he may, the least honourable of the two is next in honour to the most honourable of the two, because they are no more but two; and, where there are only two, there can be nothing between. Therefore sit, and drink. GWIN O EUR: wine from gold.'

Elphin motioned Teithrin to approach, and sit next to him.

Prince Seithenyn, whose liquor was 'his eating and his drinking solely', seemed to measure the gastronomy of his guests by his own; but his groom of the pantry thought the strangers might be disposed to eat, and placed before them a choice of provision, on which Teithrin ap Tathral did vigorous execution.

. 'I pray your excuses,' said Seithenyn, 'my stomach is weak, and I am subject to dizziness in the head, and my memory is not so good as it was, and my faculties of attention are somewhat impaired, and I would dilate more upon the topic, whereby you should hold me excused, but I am troubled with a feverishness and parching of the mouth, that very much injures my speech, and impedes my saying all I would say, and will say before I have done, in token of my loyalty and fealty to your highness and your highness's house. I must just moisten my lips, and I will then proceed with my observations. Cupbearer, fill.'

'Prince Seithenyn,' said Elphin, 'I have visited you on a subject of deep moment. Reports have been brought to me, that the embankment, which has been so long intrusted to your care, is in a state of dangerous decay.'

'Decay,' said Seithenyn, 'is one thing, and danger is another. Every thing that is old must decay. That the embankment is old, I am free to confess; that it is somewhat rotten in parts, I will not altogether deny; that it is any the worse for that, I do most sturdily gainsay. It does its business well: it works well: it keeps out the water from the land, and it lets in the wine upon the High Commission of Embankment. Cupbearer, fill. Our ancestors were wiser than we: they built it in their wisdom; and, if we should be so rash as to try to mend it, we should only mar it.'

'The stonework,' said Teithrin, 'is sapped and mined: the piles are rotten, broken, and dislocated: the floodgates and sluices are leaky and creaky.'

'That is the beauty of it,' said Seithenyn.

'Some parts of it are rotten, and some parts of it are sound.'

'It is well,' said Elphin, 'that some parts are sound: it were better that all were so.'

'So I have heard some people say before,' said Seithenyn; 'perverse people, blind to venerable antiquity: that very unamiable sort of people, who are in the habit of indulging their reason. But I say, the parts that are rotten give elasticity to those that are sound: they give them elasticity, elasticity, elasticity. If it were all sound, it would break by its own obstinate stiffness: the soundness is checked by the rottenness, and the stiffness is balanced by the elasticity. There is nothing so dangerous as innovation. See the waves in the equinoctial storms, dashing and clashing, roaring and pouring, spattering and battering, rattling and battling against it. I would not be so presumptuous as to say, I could build any thing that would stand against them half an hour; and here this immortal old work, which God forbid the finger of modern mason should bring into jeopardy, this immortal work has stood for centuries, and will stand for centuries more, if we let it alone. It is well: it works well: let well alone. Cupbearer, fill. It was half rotten when I was born, and that is a conclusive reason why it should be three parts rotten when I die.'

The whole body of the High Commission roared approbation.

'And after all,' said Seithenyn, 'the worst that could happen would be the overflow of a springtide, for that was the worst that happened before the embankment was thought of; and, if the high water should come in, as it did before, the low

water would go out again, as it did before. We should be no deeper in it than our ancestors were, and we could mend as easily as they could make.'

'The level of the sea,' said Teithrin, 'is materially altered.'

'The level of the sea!' exclaimed Seithenyn. 'Who ever heard of such a thing as altering the level of the sea? Alter the level of that bowl of wine before you, in which, as I sit here, I see a very ugly reflection of your very goodlooking face. Alter the level of that: drink up the reflection: let me see the face without the reflection, and leave the sea to level itself.'

'Not to level the embankment,' said Teithrin.

'Good, very good,' said Seithenyn. 'I love a smart saying, though it hits at me. But, whether yours is a smart saying or no, I do not very clearly see; and, whether it hits at me or no, I do not very sensibly feel. But all is one. Cupbearer, fill.'

'I think,' pursued Seithenyn, looking as intently as he could at Teithrin ap Tathral, 'I have seen something very like you before. There was a fellow here the other day very like you: he stayed here some time: he would not talk: he did nothing but drink: he used to drink till he could not stand, and then he went walking about the embankment. I suppose he thought it wanted mending; but he did not say any thing. If he had, I should have told him to embank his own throat, to keep the liquor out of that. That would have posed him: he could not have answered that: he would not have had a word to say for himself after that.'

'He must have been a miraculous person,' said Teithrin, 'to walk when he could not stand.'

'All is one for that,' said Seithenyn. 'Cupbearer, fill.'

'Prince Seithenyn,' said Elphin, 'if I were not aware that wine speaks in the silence of reason, I should be astonished at your strange vindication of your neglect of duty, which I take shame to myself for not having sooner known and remedied. The wise bard has well observed, "Nothing is done without the eye of the king."'

'I am very sorry,' said Seithenyn, 'that you see things in a wrong light: but we will not quarrel for three reasons: first, because you are the son of the king, and may do and say what you please, without any one having a right to be displeased: second, because I never quarrel with a guest, even if he grows riotous in his cups: third, because there is nothing to quarrel about; and perhaps that is the best reason of the three; or rather the first is the best, because you are the son of the king; and the third is the second, that is, the second best, because there is nothing to quarrel about; and the second is nothing to the purpose, because, though guests will grow riotous in their cups, in spite of my good orderly example, God forbid I should say, that is the case with you. And I completely agree in the truth of your remark, that reason speaks in the silence of wine.'

Seithenyn accompanied his speech with a vehement swinging of his right hand: in so doing, at this point, he dropped his cup: a sudden impulse of rash volition, to pick it dexterously up before he resumed his discourse, ruined all his devices for maintaining dignity; in stooping forward from his chair, he lost his balance, and fell prostrate on the floor.

The whole body of the High Commission arose in simultaneous confusion, each zealous to be the foremost in uplifting his fallen chief. In the vehemence of their uprise, they hurled the benches backward and the tables forward; the crash of cups and bowls accompanied their overthrow; and rivulets of liquor ran gurgling through the hall. The household wished to redeem the credit of their leader in the eyes of the Prince; but the only service they could render him was to participate his discomfiture; for Seithenyn, as he was first in dignity, was also, as was fitting, hardest in skull; and that which had impaired his equilibrium had utterly destroyed theirs. Some fell, in the first impulse, with the tables and benches; others were tripped up by the rolling bowls; and the remainder fell at different points of progression, by jostling against each other, or stumbling over those who had fallen before them.

CHAPTER III

THE OPPRESSION OF GWENHIDWY

Nid meddw y dyn a allo
Cwnu ei hun a rhodio,
Ac yved rhagor ddiawd:
Nid yw hyny yn veddwdawd.

Not drunk is he, who from the floor
Can rise alone, and still drink more;
But drunk is he, who prostrate lies,
Without the power to drink or rise.

A SIDE door, at the upper end of the hall, to the left of Seithenyn's chair, opened, and a beautiful young girl entered the hall, with her domestic bard, and her attendant maidens.

It was Angharad, the daughter of Seithenyn.

The tumult had drawn her from the solitude of her chamber, apprehensive that some evil might befall her father in that incapability of self-protection to which he made a point of bringing himself by set of sun. She gracefully saluted Prince Elphin, and directed the cupbearers, (who were bound, by their office, to remain half sober till the rest of the company were finished off, after which they indemnified themselves at leisure,) she directed the cupbearers to lift up Prince Seithenyn, and bear him from the hall. The cupbearers reeled off with their lord, who had already fallen asleep, and who now began to play them a pleasant march with his nose, to inspirit their progression.

Elphin gazed with delight on the beautiful apparition, whose gentle and serious loveliness contrasted so strikingly with the broken trophies and fallen heroes of revelry that lay scattered at her feet.

'Stranger,' she said, 'this seems an unfitting place for you: let me conduct you where you will be more agreeably lodged.'

'Still less should I deem it fitting for you, fair maiden,' said Elphin.

She answered, 'The pleasure of her father is the duty of Angharad.'

Elphin was desirous to protract the conversation, and this very desire took from him the power of speaking to the purpose. He paused for a moment to collect his ideas, and Angharad stood still, in apparent expectation that he would show symptoms of following, in compliance with her invitation.

In this interval of silence, he heard the loud dashing of the sea, and the blustering of the wind through the apertures of the walls.

This supplied him with what has been, since Britain was Britain, the alpha and omega of British conversation. He said, 'It seems a stormy night.'

She answered, 'We are used to storms: we are far from the mountains, between the lowlands and the sea, and the winds blow round us from all quarters.'

There was another pause of deep silence. The noise of the sea was louder, and the gusts pealed like thunder through the apertures. Amidst the fallen and sleeping revellers, the confused and littered hall, the low and wavering torches, Angharad, lovely always, shone with single and surpassing loveliness. The gust died away in murmurs, and swelled again into thunder, and died away in murmurs again; and, as it died away, mixed with the murmurs of ocean, a voice, that seemed one of the many voices of the wind, pronounced the ominous words, 'Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy.'

They looked at each other, as if questioning whether all had heard alike.

'Did you not hear a voice?' said Angharad, after a pause.

'The same,' said Elphin, 'which has once before seemed to say to me, "Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy."'

Teithrin hurried forth on the rampart: Angharad turned pale, and leaned against a pillar of the hall. Elphin was amazed and awed, absorbed as his feelings were in her. The sleepers on the floor made an uneasy movement, and uttered an inarticulate cry.

Teithrin returned. 'What saw you?' said Elphin.

Teithrin answered, ' A tempest is coming from the west. The moon has waned three days, and is half hidden in clouds, just visible above the mountains: the bank of clouds is black in the west; the scud is flying before them; and the white waves are rolling to the shore.'

' This is the highest of the springtides,' said Angharad, ' and they are very terrible in the storms from the west, when the spray flies over the embankment, and the breakers shake the tower which has its foot in the surf.'

' Whence was the voice,' said Elphin, ' which we heard erewhile ? Was it the cry of a sleeper in his drink, or an error of the fancy, or a warning voice from the elements ? '

' It was surely nothing earthly,' said Angharad, ' nor was it an error of the fancy, for we all heard the words, " Beware of the oppression of Gwenhidwy." Often and often, in the storms of the springtides, have I feared to see her roll her power over the fields of Gwaelod.'

' Pray heaven she do not tonight,' said Teithrin.

' Can there be such a danger ? ' said Elphin.

' I think,' said Teithrin, ' of the decay I have seen, and I fear the voice I have heard.'

A long pause of deep silence ensued, during which they heard the intermitting peals of the wind, and the increasing sound of the rising sea, swelling progressively into wilder and more menacing tumult, till, with one terrific impulse, the whole violence of the equinoctial tempest seemed to burst upon the shore. It was one of those tempests which occur once in several centuries, and which, by their extensive devastations, are chronicled to eternity; for a storm that

signalizes its course with extraordinary destruction, becomes as worthy of celebration as a hero for the same reason. The old bard seemed to be of this opinion; for the turmoil which appalled Elphin, and terrified Angharad, fell upon his ears as the sound of inspiration: the *awen* came upon him; and, seizing his harp, he mingled his voice and his music with the uproar of the elements:

THE SONG OF THE FOUR WINDS[1]

Wind from the north: the young spring day
Is pleasant on the sunny mead;
The merry harps at evening play;
The dance gay youths and maidens lead:
The thrush makes chorus from the thorn:
The mighty drinker fills his horn.

Wind from the east: the shore is still;
The mountain-clouds fly tow'rds the sea;
The ice is on the winter-rill;
The great hall fire is blazing free:
The prince's circling feast is spread:
Drink fills with fumes the brainless head.

Wind from the south: in summer shade
'Tis sweet to hear the loud harp ring;
Sweet is the step of comely maid,
Who to the bard a cup doth bring:
The black crow flies where carrion lies:
Where pignuts lurk, the swine will work.

[1] This poem is a specimen of a numerous class of ancient Welsh poems, in which each stanza begins with a repetition of the predominant idea, and terminates with a proverb, more or less applicable to the subject. In some poems, the sequency of the main images is regular and connected, and the proverbial terminations strictly appropriate: in others, the sequency of the main images is loose and incoherent, and the proverbial termination has little or nothing to do with the subject of the stanza. The basis of the poem in the text is in the Englynion of Llwyarch Hên.

Wind from the west: the autumnal deep
Rolls on the shore its billowy pride:
He, who the rampart's watch must keep,
Will mark with awe the rising tide:
The high springtide, that bursts its mound,
May roll o'er miles of level ground.

Wind from the west: the mighty wave
Of ocean bounds o'er rock and sand;
The foaming surges roar and rave
Against the bulwarks of the land:
When waves are rough, and winds are high,
Good is the land that 's high and dry.

Wind from the west: the storm-clouds rise;
The breakers rave; the whirlblasts roar;
The mingled rage of seas and skies
Bursts on the low and lonely shore:
When safety 's far, and danger nigh,
Swift feet the readiest aid supply.

Wind from the west—

His song was cut short by a tremendous crash. The tower, which had its foot in the sea, had long been sapped by the waves; the storm had prematurely perfected the operation, and the tower fell into the surf, carrying with it a portion of the wall of the main building, and revealing, through the chasm, the white raging of the breakers beneath the blackness of the midnight storm. The wind rushed into the hall, extinguishing the torches within the line of its course, tossing the grey locks and loose mantle of the bard, and the light white drapery and long black tresses of Angharad. With the crash of the falling tower, and the simultaneous shriek of the women, the sleepers started from the floor, staring with drunken amazement; and, shortly after, reeling like an Indian from the wine-rolling Hydaspes,[1] in staggered Seithenyn ap Seithyn.

[1] In the fourteenth and fifteenth books of the *Dionysiaca of Nonnus*, Bacchus changes the river Astacis into wine;

Seithenyn leaned against a pillar, and stared at the sea through the rifted wall, with wild and vacant surprise. He perceived that there was an innovation, and he felt that he was injured: how, or by whom, he did not quite so clearly discern. He looked at Elphin and Teithrin, at his daughter, and at the members of his household, with a long and dismal aspect of blank and mute interrogation, modified by the struggling consciousness of puzzled self-importance, which seemed to require from his chiefship some word of command in this incomprehensible emergency. But the longer he looked, the less clearly he saw; and the longer he pondered, the less he understood. He felt the rush of the wind; he saw the white foam of the sea; his ears were dizzy with their mingled roar. He remained at length motionless, leaning against the pillar, and gazing on the breakers with fixed and glaring vacancy.

'The sleepers of Gwaelod,' said Elphin, 'they who sleep in peace and security, trusting to the vigilance of Seithenyn, what will become of them?'

'Warn them with the beacon fire,' said Teithrin, 'if there be fuel on the summit of the landward tower.'

'That of course has been neglected too,' said Elphin.

'Not so,' said Angharad, 'that has been my charge.'

and the multitudinous army of water-drinking Indians, proceeding to quench their thirst in the stream, become frantically drunk, and fall an easy prey to the Bacchic invaders. In the thirty-fifth book, the experiment is repeated on the Hydaspes. '*Ainsi conquesta Bacchus l'Inde,*' as Rabelais has it.

Teithrin seized a torch, and ascended the eastern tower, and, in a few minutes, the party in the hall beheld the breakers reddening with the reflected fire, and deeper and yet deeper crimson tinging the whirling foam, and sheeting the massy darkness of the bursting waves.

Seithenyn turned his eyes on Elphin. His recollection of him was extremely faint, and the longer he looked on him he remembered him the less. He was conscious of the presence of strangers, and of the occurrence of some signal mischief, and associated the two circumstances in his dizzy perceptions with a confused but close connexion. He said at length, looking sternly at Elphin, 'I do not know what right the wind has to blow upon me here; nor what business the sea has to show itself here; nor what business you have here: but one thing is very evident, that either my castle or the sea is on fire; and I shall be glad to know who has done it, for terrible shall be the vengeance of Seithenyn ap Seithyn. Show me the enemy,' he pursued, drawing his sword furiously, and flourishing it over his head, 'Show me the enemy; show me the enemy.'

An unusual tumult mingled with the roar of the waves; a sound, the same in kind, but greater in degree, with that produced by the loose stones of the beach, which are rolled to and fro by the surf.

Teithrin rushed into the hall, exclaiming, 'All is over! the mound is broken; and the springtide is rolling through the breach.'

Another portion of the castle wall fell into the mining waves, and, by the dim and thickly-clouded moonlight, and the red blaze of the beacon fire, they beheld a torrent pouring in from the sea

upon the plain, and rushing immediately beneath the castle walls, which, as well as the points of the embankment that formed the sides of the breach, continued to crumble away into the waters.

'Who has done this?' vociferated Seithenyn, 'Show me the enemy.'

'There is no enemy but the sea,' said Elphin, 'to which you, in your drunken madness, have abandoned the land. Think, if you can think, of what is passing in the plain. The storm drowns the cries of your victims; but the curses of the perishing are upon you.'

'Show me the enemy,' vociferated Seithenyn, flourishing his sword more furiously.

Angharad looked deprecatingly at Elphin, who abstained from further reply.

'There is no enemy but the sea,' said Teithrin, 'against which your sword avails not.'

'Who dares to say so?' said Seithenyn. 'Who dares to say that there is an enemy on earth against whom the sword of Seithenyn ap Seithyn is unavailing? Thus, thus I prove the falsehood.'

And, springing suddenly forward, he leaped into the torrent, flourishing his sword as he descended.

'Oh, my unhappy father!' sobbed Angharad, veiling her face with her arm on the shoulder of one of her female attendants, whom Elphin dexterously put aside, and substituted himself as the supporter of the desolate beauty.

'We must quit the castle,' said Teithrin, 'or we shall be buried in its ruins. We have but one path of safety, along the summit of the embankment, if there be not another breach between us and the

high land, and if we can keep our footing in this hurricane. But there is no alternative. The walls are melting away like snow.'

The bard, who was now recovered from his *awen*, and beginning to be perfectly alive to his own personal safety, conscious at the same time that the first duty of his privileged order was to animate the less-gifted multitude by examples of right conduct in trying emergencies, was the first to profit by Teithrin's admonition, and to make the best of his way through the door that opened to the embankment, on which he had no sooner set his foot than he was blown down by the wind, his harp-strings ringing as he fell. He was indebted to the impediment of his harp, for not being rolled down the mound into the waters which were rising within.

Teithrin picked him up, and admonished him to abandon his harp to its fate, and fortify his steps with a spear. The bard murmured objections: and even the reflection that he could more easily get another harp than another life, did not reconcile him to parting with his beloved companion. He got over the difficulty by slinging his harp, cumbrous as it was, to his left side, and taking a spear in his right hand.

Angharad, recovering from the first shock of Seithenyn's catastrophe, became awake to the imminent danger. The spirit of the Cymric female, vigilant and energetic in peril, disposed her and her attendant maidens to use their best exertions for their own preservation. Following the advice and example of Elphin and Teithrin, they armed themselves with spears, which they took down from the walls.

Teithrin led the way, striking the point of his spear firmly into the earth, and leaning from it on the wind: Angharad followed in the same manner: Elphin followed Angharad, looking as earnestly to her safety as was compatible with moderate care of his own: the attendant maidens followed Elphin; and the bard, whom the result of his first experiment had rendered unambitious of the van, followed the female train. Behind them went the cupbearers, whom the accident of sobriety had qualified to march: and behind them reeled and roared those of the bacchanal rout who were able and willing to move; those more especially who had wives or daughters to support their tottering steps. Some were incapable of locomotion, and others, in the heroic madness of liquor, sat down to await their destiny, as they finished the half-drained vessels.

The bard, who had somewhat of a picturesque eye, could not help sparing a little leisure from the care of his body, to observe the effects before him: the volumed blackness of the storm; the white bursting of the breakers in the faint and scarcely-perceptible moonlight; the rushing and rising of the waters within the mound; the long floating hair and waving drapery of the young women; the red light of the beacon fire falling on them from behind; the surf rolling up the side of the embankment, and breaking almost at their feet; the spray flying above their heads; and the resolution with which they impinged the stony ground with their spears, and bore themselves up against the wind.

Thus they began their march. They had not

proceeded far, when the tide began to recede, the wind to abate somewhat of its violence, and the moon to look on them at intervals through the rifted clouds, disclosing the desolation of the inundated plain, silvering the tumultuous surf, gleaming on the distant mountains, and revealing a lengthened prospect of their solitary path, that lay in its irregular line like a ribbon on the deep.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAMENTATIONS OF GWYTHNO

Οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας
Μούσαις συγκαταμιγνύς,
Ἡδίσταν συζυγίαν.

EURIPIDES

Not, though grief my age defaces,
Will I cease, in concert dear,
Blending still the gentle graces
With the muses more severe.

KING GWYTHNO had feasted joyously, and had sung his new ode to a chosen party of his admiring subjects, amidst their, of course, enthusiastic applause. He heard the storm raging without, as he laid himself down to rest: he thought it a very hard case for those who were out in it, especially on the sea; congratulated himself on his own much more comfortable condition; and went to sleep with a pious reflection on the goodness of Providence to himself.

He was roused from a pleasant dream by a confused and tumultuous dissonance, that

mingled with the roar of the tempest. Rising with much reluctance, and looking forth from his window, he beheld in the moonlight a half-naked multitude, larger than his palace thrice multiplied could have contained, pressing round the gates, and clamouring for admission and shelter; while beyond them his eye fell on the phænomenon of stormy waters, rolling in the place of the fertile fields from which he derived his revenue.

Gwythno, though a king and his own laureate, was not without sympathy for the people who had the honour and happiness of victualling his royal house, and he issued forth on his balcony full of perplexities and alarms, stunned by the sudden sense of the half-understood calamity, and his head still dizzy from the effects of abruptly-broken sleep, and the vapours of the overnight's glorious festival.

Gwythno was altogether a reasonably good sort of person, and a poet of some note. His people were somewhat proud of him on the latter score, and very fond of him on the former; for even the tenth part of those homely virtues, that decorate the memories of 'husbands kind and fathers dear' in every churchyard, are matters of plebeian admiration in the persons of royalty; and every tangible point in every such virtue so located, becomes a convenient peg for the suspension of love and loyalty. While, therefore, they were unanimous in consigning the soul of Seithenyn to a place that no well-bred divine will name to a polite congregation, they overflowed, in the abundance of their own griefs, with a portion of sympathy for Gwythno, and saluted him, as he issued forth on his balcony, with a hearty *Duw*

cadw y Brenin, or God save the King, which he returned with a benevolent wave of the hand; but they followed it up by an intense vociferation for food and lodging, which he received with a pitiful shake of the head.

Meanwhile the morning dawned: the green spots, that peered with the ebbing tide above the waste of waters, only served to indicate the irremediableness of the general desolation.

Gwythno proceeded to hold a conference with his people, as deliberately as the stormy state of the weather and their minds, and the confusion of his own, would permit. The result of the conference was, that they should use their best exertions to catch some stray beeves, which had escaped the inundation, and were lowing about the rocks in search of new pastures. This measure was carried into immediate effect: the victims were killed and roasted, carved, distributed, and eaten, in a very Homeric fashion, and washed down with a large portion of the contents of the royal cellars; after which, having more leisure to dwell on their losses, the fugitives of Gwaelod proceeded to make loud lamentation, all collectively for home and for country, and severally for wife or husband, parent or child, whom the flood had made its victims.

In the midst of these lamentations arrived Elphin and Angharad, with her bard and attendant maidens, and Teithrin ap Tathral. Gwythno, after a consultation, despatched Teithrin and Angharad's domestic bard on an embassy to the court of Uther Pendragon, and to such of the smaller kings as lay in the way, to solicit such relief as their several majesties might be

able and willing to afford to a king in distress. It is said, that the bard, finding a royal bardship vacant in a more prosperous court, made the most of himself in the market, and stayed where he was better fed and lodged than he could expect to be in Caredigion; but that Teithrin returned, with many valuable gifts, and most especially one from Merlin, being a hamper, which multiplied an hundredfold by morning whatever was put into it overnight, so that, for a ham and a flask put by in the evening, an hundred hams and an hundred flasks were taken out in the morning. It is at least certain that such a hamper is enumerated among the thirteen wonders of Merlin's art, and, in the authentic catalogue thereof, is called the Hamper of Gwythno.

Be this as it may, Gwythno, though shorn of the beams of his revenue, kept possession of his palace. Elphin married Angharad, and built a salmon-weir on the Mawddach, the produce of which, with that of a series of beehives, of which his princess and her maidens made mead, constituted for some time the principal wealth and subsistence of the royal family of Caredigion.

King Gwythno, while his son was delving or fishing, and his daughter spinning or making mead, sat all day on the rocks, with his harp between his knees, watching the rolling of ocean over the locality of his past dominion, and pouring forth his soul in pathetic song on the change of his own condition, and the mutability of human things. Two of his songs of lamentation have been preserved by tradition: they are the only relics of his muse which time has spared.

GWYDDNAU EI CANT,

PAN DDOAI Y MOR DROS CANTREV Y GWAELAWD

A SONG OF GWYTHNO GARANHIR,

ON THE INUNDATION OF THE SEA OVER THE PLAIN OF GWAELOD

Stand forth, Seithenyn: winds are high:
Look down beneath the lowering sky;
Look from the rock: what meets thy sight?
Nought but the breakers rolling white.

Stand forth, Seithenyn: winds are still:
Look from the rock and heathy hill
For Gwythno's realm: what meets thy view?
Nought but the ocean's desert blue.

Curst be the treacherous mound, that gave
A passage to the mining wave:
Curst be the cup, with mead-froth crowned,
That charmed from thought the trusted mound.

A tumult, and a cry to heaven!
The white surf breaks; the mound is riven:
Through the wide rift the ocean-spring
Bursts with tumultuous ravaging.

The western ocean's stormy might
Is curling o'er the rampart's height:
Destruction strikes with want and scorn
Presumption, from abundance born.

The tumult of the western deep
Is on the winds, affrighting sleep:
It thunders at my chamber-door;
It bids me wake, to sleep no more.

The tumult of the midnight sea
Swells inland, wildly, fearfully:
The mountain-caves respond its shocks
Among the unaccustomed rocks.

The tumult of the vext sea-coast
Rolls inland like an armed host:
It leaves, for flocks and fertile land,
But foaming waves and treacherous sand.

The wild sea rolls where long have been
Glad homes of men, and pastures green:
To arrogance and wealth succeed
Wide ruin and avenging need.

Scithenyn, come: I call in vain:
The high of birth and weak of brain
Sleeps under ocean's lonely roar
Between the rampart and the shore.

The eternal waste of waters, spread
Above his unrespected head,
The blue expanse, with foam besprent,
Is his too glorious monument.

ANOTHER SONG OF GWYTHNO

I love the green and tranquil shore;
I hate the ocean's dizzy roar,
Whose devastating spray has flown
High o'er the monarch's barrier-stone.

Sad was the feast, which he who spread
Is numbered with the inglorious dead;
The feast within the torch-lit hall,
While stormy breakers mined the wall.

To him repentance came too late:
In cups the chatterer met his fate:
Sudden and sad the doom that burst
On him and me, but mine the worst.

I love the shore, and hate the deep:
The wave has robbed my nights of sleep:
The heart of man is cheered by wine;
But now the wine-cup cheers not mine.

The feast, which bounteous hands dispense,
Makes glad the soul, and charms the sense:
But in the circling feast I know
The coming of my deadliest foe.

Blest be the rock, whose foot supplied
A step to them that fled the tide;
The rock of bards, on whose rude steep
I bless the shore, and hate the deep.

'The sigh of Gwythno Garanhir when the breakers ploughed up his land'[1] is the substance of a proverbial distich, which may still be heard on the coast of Merioneth and Cardigan, to express the sense of an overwhelming calamity. The curious investigator may still land on a portion of the ancient stony rampart; which stretches, off the point of Mochres, far out into Cardigan Bay, nine miles of the summit being left dry, in calm weather, by the low water of the springtides; and which is now called Sarn Badrig, or St. Patrick's Causeway.

Thus the kingdom of Caredigion fell into ruin: its people were destroyed, or turned out of house and home; and its royal family were brought to a condition in which they found it difficult to get loaves to their fishes. We, who live in more enlightened times, amidst the 'gigantic strides of intellect,' when offices of public trust are so conscientiously and zealously discharged, and so vigilantly checked and superintended, may wonder at the wicked negligence of Seithenyn; at the sophisms with which, in his liquor, he vindicated his system, and pronounced the eulogium of his old dilapidations, and at the blind confidence of

[1] Ochenaid Gwyddnau Garanhir
Pan droes y don dros ei dir.

Gwythno and his people in this virtual guardian of their lives and property: happy that our own public guardians are too virtuous to act or talk like Seithenyn, and that we ourselves are too wise not to perceive, and too free not to prevent it, if they should be so disposed.

CHAPTER V

THE PRIZE OF THE WEIR

> Weave a circle round him thrice,
> And close your eyes with holy dread;
> For he on honey-dew hath fed,
> And drank the milk of paradise.
>
> COLERIDGE.

PRINCE ELPHIN constructed his salmon-weir on the Mawddach at the point where the fresh water met the top of the springtides. He built near it a dwelling for himself and Angharad, for which the old king Gwythno gradually deserted his palace. An amphitheatre of rocky mountains enclosed a pastoral valley. The meadows gave pasture to a few cows; and the flowers of the mountain-heath yielded store of honey to the bees of many hives, which were tended by Angharad and her handmaids. Elphin had also some sheep, which wandered on the mountains. The worst was, they often wandered out of reach; but, when he could not find his sheep, he brought down a wild goat, the venison of Gwyneth. The woods and turbaries supplied unlimited fuel. The straggling cultivators, who had escaped from the desolation of Gwaelod, and settled themselves above the level of the sea,

on a few spots propitious to the plough, still acknowledged their royalty, and paid them tribute in corn. But their principal wealth was fish. Elphin was the first Briton who caught fish on a large scale, and salted them for other purposes than home consumption.

The weir was thus constructed : a range of piles crossed the river from shore to shore, slanting upwards from both shores, and meeting at an angle in the middle of the river. A little down the stream a second range of piles crossed the river in the same manner, having towards the middle several wide intervals with light wicker gates, which, meeting at an angle, were held together by the current, but were so constructed as to yield easily to a very light pressure from below. These gates gave all fish of a certain magnitude admission to a chamber, from which they could neither advance nor retreat, and from which, standing on a narrow bridge attached to the lower piles, Elphin bailed them up at leisure. The smaller fish passed freely up and down the river through the interstices of the piles. This weir was put together in the early summer, and taken to pieces and laid by in the autumn.

Prince Elphin, one fine July night, was sleepless and troubled in spirit. His fishery had been beyond all precedent unproductive, and the obstacle which this circumstance opposed to his arrangements for victualling his little garrison kept him for the better half of the night vigilant in unprofitable cogitation. Soon after the turn of midnight, when dreams are true, he was startled from an incipient doze by a sudden cry of Angharad, who had been favored with a vision of a miraculous draught of fish. Elphin, as

a drowning man catches at a straw, caught at the shadowy promise of Angharad's dream, and at once, beneath the clear light of the just-waning moon, he sallied forth with his princess to examine his weir.

The weir was built across the stream of the river, just above the flow of the ordinary tides; but the springtide had opened the wicker gates, and had floated up a coracle [1] between a pair of them, which closing, as the tide turned, on the coracle's nose, retained it within the chamber of the weir, at the same time that it kept the gates sufficiently open to permit the escape of any fish that might have entered the chamber. The great prize, which undoubtedly might have been there when Angharad dreamed of it, was gone to a fish.

Elphin, little pleased, stepped on the narrow bridge, and opened the gates with a pole that terminated piscatorially in a hook. The coracle began dropping down the stream. Elphin arrested its course, and guided it to land.

In the coracle lay a sleeping child, clothed in splendid apparel. Angharad took it in her arms. The child opened its eyes, and stretched its little arms towards her with a smile; and she uttered, in delight and wonder at its surpassing beauty, the exclamation of 'Taliesin!' 'Radiant brow!'

Elphin, nevertheless, looked very dismal on finding no food, and an additional mouth; so dismal, that his physiognomy on that occasion passed into a proverb: 'As rueful as Elphin when he found Taliesin.' [2]

In after years, Taliesin, being on the safe side

[1] A small boat of basketwork, sheathed with leather.

[2] Mor drist ac Elffin pan gavod Taliesin.

of prophecy, and writing after the event, addressed a poem to Elphin, in the character of the foundling of the coracle, in which he supposes himself, at the moment of his discovery, to have addressed Elphin as follows :

DYHUDDIANT ELFFIN

THE CONSOLATION OF ELPHIN

Lament not, Elphin : do not measure
By one brief hour thy loss or gain :
Thy weir tonight has borne a treasure,
Will more than pay thee years of pain.
St. Cynllo's aid will not be vain :
Smooth thy bent brow, and cease to mourn :
Thy weir will never bear again
Such wealth as it tonight has borne.

The stormy seas, the silent rivers,
The torrents down the steeps that spring,
Alike of weal or woe are givers,
As pleases heaven's immortal king.
Though frail I seem, rich gifts I bring,
Which in Time's fulness shall appear,
Greater than if the stream should fling
Three hundred salmon in thy weir.

Cast off this fruitless sorrow, loading
With heaviness the unmanly mind :
Despond not ; mourn not ; evil boding
Creates the ill it fears to find.
When fates are dark, and most unkind
Are they who most should do thee right,
Then wilt thou know thine eyes were blind
To thy good fortune of tonight.

Though, small and feeble, from my coracle
To thee my helpless hands I spread,
Yet in me breathes a holy oracle
To bid thee lift thy drooping head.
When hostile steps around thee tread,
A spell of power my voice shall wield,
That, more than arms with slaughter red,
Shall be thy refuge and thy shield.

Two years after this event, Angharad presented Elphin with a daughter, whom they named Melanghel. The fishery prospered; and the progress of cultivation and population among the more fertile parts of the mountain districts brought in a little revenue to the old king.

CHAPTER VI

THE EDUCATION OF TALIESIN

The three objects of intellect: the true, the beautiful, and the beneficial.

The three foundations of wisdom: youth, to acquire learning; memory, to retain learning; and genius, to illustrate learning.

TRIADS OF WISDOM.

The three primary requisites of poetical genius: an eye, that can see nature; a heart, that can feel nature; and a resolution, that dares follow nature.

TRIADS OF POETRY.

As Taliesin grew up, Gwythno instructed him in all the knowledge of the age, which was of course not much, in comparison with ours. The science of political economy was sleeping in the womb of time. The advantage of growing rich by getting into debt and paying interest was altogether unknown: the safe and economical currency, which is produced by a man writing his name on a bit of paper, for which other men give him their property, and which he is always ready to exchange for another bit of paper, of an equally safe and economical manufacture, being also equally ready to render his own person, at a moment's notice, as impalpable as the metal which he promises to pay,

is a stretch of wisdom to which the people of those days had nothing to compare. They had no steam-engines, with fires as eternal as those of the nether world, wherein the squalid many, from infancy to age, might be turned into component portions of machinery for the benefit of the purple-faced few. They could neither poison the air with gas, nor the waters with its dregs: in short, they made their money of metal, and breathed pure air, and drank pure water, like unscientific barbarians.

Of moral science they had little; but morals, without science, they had about the same as we have. They had a number of fine precepts, partly from their religion, partly from their bards, which they remembered in their liquor, and forgot in their business.

Political science they had none. The blessings of virtual representation were not even dreamed of; so that, when any of their barbarous metallic currency got into their pockets or coffers, it had a chance to remain there, subjecting them to the inconvenience of unemployed capital. Still they went to work politically much as we do. The powerful took all they could get from their subjects and neighbours; and called something or other sacred and glorious, when they wanted the people to fight for them. They repressed disaffection by force, when it showed itself in an overt act; but they encouraged freedom of speech, when it was, like Hamlet's reading, 'words, words, words.'

There was no liberty of the press, because there was no press; but there was liberty of speech to the bards, whose persons were inviolable, and the general motto of their order was Y Gwir yn erbyn y Byd: the Truth against the World. If many of

them, instead of acting up to this splendid profession, chose to advance their personal fortunes by appealing to the selfishness, the passions, and the prejudices, of kings, factions, and the rabble, our free press gentry may afford them a little charity out of the excess of their own virtue.

In physical science, they supplied the place of knowledge by converting conjectures into dogmas; an art which is not yet lost. They held that the earth was the centre of the universe; that an immense ocean surrounded the earth; that the sky was a vast frame resting on the ocean; that the circle of their contact was a mystery of infinite mist; with a great deal more of cosmogony and astronomy, equally correct and profound, which answered the same purpose as our more correct and profound astronomy answers now, that of elevating the mind, as the eidouranion lecturers have it, to sublime contemplations.

Medicine was cultivated by the Druids, and it was just as much a science with them as with us; but they had not the wit or the means to make it a flourishing trade; the principal means to that end being women with nothing to do, articles which especially belong to a high state of civilization.

The laws lay in a small compass: every bard had those of his own community by heart. The king, or chief, was the judge; the plaintiff and defendant told their own story; and the cause was disposed of in one hearing. We may well boast of the progress of light, when we turn from this picture to the statutes at large, and the Court of Chancery; and we may indulge in a pathetic reflection on our sweet-faced myriads of 'learned

friends,' who would be under the unpleasant necessity of suspending themselves by the neck, if this barbaric 'practice of the courts' were suddenly revived.

The religion of the time was Christianity grafted on Druidism. The Christian faith had been very early preached in Britain. Some of the Welsh historians are of opinion that it was first preached by some of the apostles: most probably by St. John. They think the evidence inconclusive with respect to St. Paul. But, at any rate, the faith had made considerable progress among the Britons at the period of the arrival of Hengist; for many goodly churches, and, what was still better, richly-endowed abbeys, were flourishing in many places. The British clergy were, however, very contumacious towards the see of Rome, and would only acknowledge the spiritual authority of the archbishopric of Caer Lleon, which was, during many centuries, the primacy of Britain. St. Augustin, when he came over, at a period not long subsequent to that of the present authentic history, to preach Christianity to the Saxons, who had for the most part held fast to their Odinism, had also the secondary purpose of making them instruments for teaching the British clergy submission to Rome: as a means to which end, the newly-converted Saxons set upon the monastery of Bangor Iscoed, and put its twelve hundred monks to the sword. This was the first overt act in which the Saxons set forth their new sense of a religion of peace. It is alleged, indeed, that these twelve hundred monks supported themselves by the labour of their own hands. If they did so, it was, no doubt, a gross heresy; but whether it deserved

the castigation it received from St. Augustin's proselytes, may be a question in polemics.

As the people did not read the Bible, and had no religious tracts, their religion, it may be assumed, was not very pure. The rabble of Britons must have seen little more than the superficial facts, that the lands, revenues, privileges, and so forth, which once belonged to Druids and so forth, now belonged to abbots, bishops, and so forth, who, like their extruded precursors, walked occasionally in a row, chanting unintelligible words, and never speaking in common language but to exhort the people to fight; having, indeed, better notions than their predecessors of building, apparel, and cookery; and a better knowledge of the means of obtaining good wine, and of the final purpose for which it was made.

They were observant of all matters of outward form, and tradition even places among them personages who were worthy to have founded a society for the suppression of vice. It is recorded, in the Triads, that 'Gwrgi Garwlwyd killed a male and female of the Cymry daily, and devoured them; and, on the Saturday, he killed two of each, that he might not kill on the Sunday.' This can only be a type of some sanctimonious hero, who made a cloak of piety for oppressing the poor.

But, even among the Britons, in many of the least populous and most mountainous districts, Druidism was still struggling with Christianity. The lamb had driven the wolf from the rich pastures of the vallies to the high places of the wilderness, where the rites and mysteries of the old religion flourished in secrecy, and where a stray

proselyte of the new light was occasionally caught and roasted for the glory of Andraste.

Taliesin, worshipping Nature in her wildest solitudes, often strayed away for days from the dwelling of Elphin, and penetrated the recesses of Eryri,[1] where one especial spot on the banks of Lake Ceirionydd became the favorite haunt of his youth. In these lonely recesses, he became familiar with Druids, who initiated him in their mysteries, which, like all other mysteries, consisted of a quantity of allegorical mummery, pretending to be symbolical of the immortality of the soul, and of its progress through various stages of being; interspersed with a little, too literal, ducking and singeing of the aspirant, by way of trying his mettle, just enough to put him in fear, but not in risk, of his life.

That Taliesin was thoroughly initiated in these mysteries is evident from several of his poems, which have neither head nor tail, and which, having no sense in any other point of view, must necessarily, as a learned mythologist has demonstrated, be assigned to the class of theology, in which an occult sense can be found or made for them, according to the views of the expounder. One of them, a shade less obscure than its companions, unquestionably adumbrates the Druidical doctrine of transmigration. According to this poem, Taliesin had been with the cherubim at the fall of Lucifer, in Paradise at the fall of man, and with Alexander at the fall of Babylon; in the ark with Noah, and in the milky-way with Tetragrammaton; and in many other equally marvellous or memorable conditions: showing that, though the

[1] Snowdon.

names and histories of the new religion were adopted, its doctrines had still to be learned; and, indeed, in all cases of this description, names are changed more readily than doctrines, and doctrines more readily than ceremonies.

When any of the Romans or Saxons, who invaded the island, fell into the hands of the Britons, before the introduction of Christianity, they were handed over to the Druids, who sacrificed them, with pious ceremonies, to their goddess Andraste. These human sacrifices have done much injury to the Druidical character, amongst us, who never practise them in the same way. They lacked, it must be confessed, some of our light, and also some of our prisons. They lacked some of our light, to enable them to perceive that the act of coming, in great multitudes, with fire and sword, to the remote dwellings of peaceable men, with the premeditated design of cutting their throats, ravishing their wives and daughters, killing their children, and appropriating their worldly goods, belongs, not to the department of murder and robbery, but to that of legitimate war, of which all the practitioners are gentlemen, and entitled to be treated like gentlemen. They lacked some of our prisons, in which our philanthropy has provided accommodation for so large a portion of our own people, wherein, if they had left their prisoners alive, they could have kept them from returning to their countrymen, and being at their old tricks again immediately. They would also, perhaps, have found some difficulty in feeding them, from the lack of the county rates, by which the most sensible and amiable part of our nation, the country squires, contrive to coop up, and feed,

at the public charge, all who meddle with the wild animals of which they have given themselves the monopoly. But as the Druids could neither lock up their captives, nor trust them at large, the darkness of their intellect could suggest no alternative to the process they adopted, of putting them out of the way, which they did with all the sanctions of religion and law. If one of these old Druids could have slept, like the seven sleepers of Ephesus, and awaked, in the nineteenth century, some fine morning near Newgate, the exhibition of some half-dozen funipendulous forgers might have shocked the tender bowels of his humanity, as much as one of his wicker baskets of captives in the flames shocked those of Caesar; and it would, perhaps, have been difficult to convince him that paper credit was not an idol, and one of a more sanguinary character than his Andraste. The Druids had their view of these matters, and we have ours; and it does not comport with the steam-engine speed of our march of mind to look at more than one side of a question.

The people lived in darkness and vassalage. They were lost in the grossness of beef and ale. They had no pamphleteering societies to demonstrate that reading and writing are better than meat and drink; and they were utterly destitute of the blessings of those 'schools for all,' the house of correction, and the treadmill, wherein the autochthonal justice of our agrestic kakistocracy now castigates the heinous sins which were then committed with impunity, of treading on old footpaths, picking up dead wood, and moving on the face of the earth within sound of the whirr of a partridge.

The learning of the time was confined to the bards. It consisted in a somewhat complicated art of versification; in a great number of pithy apophthegms, many of which have been handed down to posterity under the title of the Wisdom of Catog; in an interminable accumulation of Triads, in which form they bound up all their knowledge, physical, traditional, and mythological: and in a mighty condensation of mysticism, being the still-cherished relics of the Druidical rites and doctrines.

The Druids were the sacred class of the bardic order. Before the change of religion, it was by far the most numerous class; for the very simple reason, that there was most to be got by it: all ages and nations having been sufficiently enlightened to make the trade of priest more profitable than that of poet. During this period, therefore, it was the only class that much attracted the notice of foreigners. After the change of religion, the denomination was retained as that of the second class of the order. The Bardd Braint, or Bard of Presidency, was of the ruling order, and wore a robe of sky-blue. The Derwydd, or Druid, wore a robe of white. The Ovydd, or Ovate, was of the class of initiation, and wore a robe of green. The Awenyddion, or disciples, the candidates for admission into the Bardic order, wore a variegated dress of the three colours, and were passed through a very severe moral and intellectual probation.

Gwythno was a Bardd Braint, or Bard of Presidency, and as such he had full power in his own person, without the intervention of a Bardic Congress, to make his Awenydd or disciple, Taliesin, an Ovydd or Ovate, which he did accordingly. Angharad, under the old king's instructions,

prepared the green robe of the young aspirant's investiture. He afterwards acquired the white robe amongst the Druids of Eryri.

In all Bardic learning, Gwythno was profound. All that he knew he taught to Taliesin. The youth drew in the draughts of inspiration among the mountain forests and the mountain streams, and grew up under the roof of Elphin, in the perfection of genius and beauty.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUNTINGS OF MAELGON

Αἰεὶ τὸ μὲν ζῇ, τὸ δὲ μεθίσταται κακὸν,
Τὸ δ' ἐκπέφηνεν αὐτίκ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς νέον.

EURIPIDES.

One ill is ever clinging;
One treads upon its heels;
A third, in distance springing,
Its fearful front reveals.

GWYTHNO slept, not with his fathers, for they were under the sea, but as near to them as was found convenient, within the sound of the breakers that rolled over their ancient dwellings. Elphin was now king of Caredigion, and was lord of a large but thinly-peopled tract of rock, mountain, forest, and bog. He held his sovereignty, however, not, as Gwythno had done during the days of the glory of Gwaelod, by that most indisputable sort of right which consists in might, but by the more precarious tenure of the absence of inclination in any of his brother kings to take away any thing he had.

Uther Pendragon, like Gwythno, went the way of all flesh, and Arthur reigned in Caer Lleon, as

king of the kings of Britain. Maelgon Gwyneth was then king of that part of North Wales which bordered on the kingdom of Caredigion.

Maelgon was a mighty hunter, and roused the echoes of the mountains with horn and with hound. He went forth to the chace as to war, provisioned for days and weeks, supported by bard and butler, and all the apparel of princely festivity. He pitched his tents in the forest of Snowdon, by the shore of lake or torrent; and, after hunting all the day, he feasted half the night. The light of his torches gleamed on the foam of the cataracts, and the sound of harp and song was mingled with their midnight roar.

When not thus employed, he was either feasting in his castle of Diganwy, on the Conwy, or fighting with any of the neighbouring kings, who had any thing which he wanted, and which he thought himself strong enough to take from them.

Once, towards the close of autumn, he carried the tumult of the chace into the recesses of Meirion. The consonance, or dissonance, of men and dogs, outpealed the noise of the torrents among the rocks and woods of the Mawddach. Elphin and Teithrin were gone after the sheep or goats in the mountains; Taliesin was absent on the borders of his favorite lake; Angharad and Melanghel were alone. The careful mother, alarmed at the unusual din, and knowing, by rumor, of what materials the Nimrods of Britain were made, fled, with her daughter and handmaids, to the refuge of a deeply-secluded cavern, which they had long before noted as a safe retreat from peril. As they ascended the hills that led to the cavern, they looked back, at intervals, through the openings of the woods, to the growing

tumult on the opposite side of the valley. The wild goats were first seen, flying in all directions, taking prodigious leaps from crag to crag, now and then facing about, and rearing themselves on their hind legs, as if in act to butt, and immediately thinking better of it, and springing away on all fours among the trees. Next, the more rare spectacle of a noble stag presented itself on the summit of a projecting rock, pausing a moment to snuff the air, then bounding down the most practicable slope to the valley. Next, on the summit which the stag had just deserted, appeared a solitary huntsman, sitting on a prancing horse, and waking a hundred echoes with the blast of his horn. Next rushed into view the main body of the royal company, and the two-legged and four-legged avalanche came thundering down on the track of the flying prey: not without imminent hazard of broken necks; though the mountain-bred horses, which possessed by nature almost the surefootedness of mules, had finished their education under the first professors of the age.

The stag swam the river, and stood at bay before the dwelling of Elphin, where he was in due time despatched by the conjoint valour of dog and man. The royal train burst into the solitary dwelling, where, finding nothing worthy of much note, excepting a large store of salt salmon and mead, they proceeded to broil and tap, and made fearful havoc among the family's winter provision. Elphin and Teithrin, returning to their expected dinner, stood aghast on the threshold of their plundered sanctuary. Maelgon condescended to ask them who they were; and, learning Elphin's name and quality, felt himself bound to return his involuntary

hospitality by inviting him to Diganwy. So strong was his sense of justice on this head, that, on Elphin's declining the invitation, which Maelgon ascribed to modesty, he desired two of his grooms to take him up and carry him off.

So Elphin was impressed into royal favor, and was feasted munificently in the castle of Diganwy. Teithrin brought home the ladies from the cavern, and, during the absence of Elphin, looked after the sheep and goats, and did his master's business as well as his own.

One evening, when the royal 'nowle' was 'tottie of the must,' while the bards of Maelgon were singing the praises of their master, and of all and every thing that belonged to him, as the most eximious and transcendent persons and things of the superficial garniture of the earth, Maelgon said to Elphin, 'My bards say that I am the best and bravest of kings, that my queen is the most beautiful and chaste of women, and that they themselves, by virtue of belonging to me, are the best and wisest of bards. Now what say you, on these heads?'

This was a perplexing question to Elphin, who, nevertheless, answered: 'That you are the best and bravest of kings I do not in the least doubt; yet I cannot think that any woman surpasses my own wife in beauty and chastity; or that any bard equals my bard in genius and wisdom.'

'Hear you him, Rhûn?' said Maelgon.

'I hear,' said Rhûn, 'and mark.'

Rhûn was the son of Maelgon, and a worthy heir apparent of his illustrious sire. Rhûn set out the next morning on an embassy very similar to Tarquin's, accompanied by only one attendant.

They lost their way and each other, among the forests of Meirion. The attendant, after riding about some time in great trepidation, thought he heard the sound of a harp, mixed with the roar of the torrents, and following its indications, came at length within sight of an oak-fringed precipice, on the summit of which stood Taliesin, playing and singing to the winds and waters. The attendant could not approach him without dismounting; therefore, tying his horse to a branch, he ascended the rock, and, addressing the young bard, inquired his way to the dwelling of Elphin. Taliesin, in return, inquired his business there; and, partly by examination, partly by divination, ascertained his master's name, and the purport of his visit.

Taliesin deposited his harp in a dry cavern of the rock, and undertook to be the stranger's guide. The attendant remounted his horse, and Taliesin preceded him on foot. But the way by which he led him grew more and more rugged, till the stranger called out, 'Whither lead you, my friend? My horse can no longer keep his footing.' 'There is no other way,' said Taliesin. 'But give him to my management, and do you follow on foot.' The attendant consented. Taliesin mounted the horse, and presently struck into a more practicable track; and immediately giving the horse the reins, he disappeared among the woods, leaving the unfortunate equerry to follow as he might, with no better guide than the uncertain recollection of the sound of his horse's heels.

Taliesin reached home before the arrival of Rhûn, and warned Angharad of the mischief that was designed her.

Rhûn, arriving at his destination, found only

a handmaid dressed as Angharad, and another officiating as her attendant. The fictitious princess gave him a supper, and every thing else he asked for; and, at parting in the morning, a lock of her hair, and a ring, which Angharad had placed on her finger.

After riding a short distance on his return, Rhûn met his unlucky attendant, torn, tired, and half-starved, and cursing some villain who had stolen his horse. Rhûn was too happy in his own success to have a grain of sympathy for his miserable follower, whom he left to find his horse and his way, or either, or neither, as he might, and returned alone to Diganwy.

Maelgon exultingly laid before Elphin the proofs of his wife's infidelity. Elphin examined the lock of hair, and listened to the narration of Rhûn. He divined at once the trick that had been put upon the prince; but he contented himself with saying, 'I do not believe that Rhûn has received the favors of Angharad; and I still think that no wife in Britain, not even the queen of Maelgon Gwyneth, is more chaste or more beautiful than mine.'

Hereupon Maelgon waxed wroth. Elphin, in a point which much concerned him, held a belief of his own, different from that which his superiors in worldly power required him to hold. Therefore Maelgon acted as the possessors of worldly power usually act in similar cases: he locked Elphin up within four stone walls, with an intimation that he should keep him there till he pronounced a more orthodox opinion on the question in dispute.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LOVE OF MELANGHEL

Ἀλλὰ τεαῖς παλάμῃσι μαχήμονα θύρσον ἀείρων,
Αἰθέρος ἄξια ῥέξον· ἐπεὶ Διὸς ἄμβροτος αὐλὴ
Οὔ σε πόνων ἀπάνευθε δεδέξεται· οὐδέ σοι Ὧραι
Μήπω ἀεθλεύσαντι πύλας πετάσουσιν Ὀλύμπου.

Grasp the bold thyrsus; seek the field's array;
And do things worthy of ethereal day:
Not without toil to earthborn man befalls
To tread the floors of Jove's immortal halls:
Never to him, who not by deeds has striven,
Will the bright Hours roll back the gates of heaven.

IRIS TO BACCHUS, *in the 13th Book of the* DIONYSIACA OF NONNUS.

THE household of Elphin was sufficiently improsperous during the absence of its chief. The havoc which Maelgon's visitation had made in their winter provision, it required the utmost exertions of their collective energies to repair. Even the young princess Melanghel sallied forth, in the garb of a huntress, to strike the deer or the wild goat among the wintry forests, on the summits of the bleak crags, or in the vallies of the flooded streams.

Taliesin, on these occasions, laid aside his harp, and the robe of his order, and accompanied the princess with his hunting spear, and more succinctly apparelled.

Their retinue, it may be supposed, was neither very numerous nor royal, nor their dogs very thoroughbred. It sometimes happened that the deer went one way, the dogs another; the attendants, losing sight of both, went a third, leaving

Taliesin, who never lost sight of Melanghel, alone with her among the hills.

One day, the ardor of the chace having carried them far beyond their ordinary bounds, they stood alone together on Craig Aderyn, the Rock of Birds, which overlooks the river Dysyni. This rock takes its name from the flocks of birds which have made it their dwelling, and which make the air resonant with their multitudinous notes. Around, before, and above them, rose mountain beyond mountain, soaring above the leafless forests, to lose their heads in mist; beneath them lay the silent river; and along the opening of its narrow valley, they looked to the not-distant sea.

'Prince Llywarch,' said Taliesin, 'is a bard and a warrior: he is the son of an illustrious line. Taliesin is neither prince nor warrior: he is the unknown child of the waters.'

'Why think you of Llywarch?' said Melanghel, to whom the name of the prince was known only from Taliesin, who knew it only from fame.

'Because,' said Taliesin, 'there is that in my soul which tells me that I shall have no rival among the bards of Britain: but, if its princes and warriors seek the love of Melanghel, I shall know that I am but a bard, and not as Llywarch.'

'You would be Prince Taliesin,' said Melanghel, smiling, 'to make me your princess. Am I not a princess already? and such an one as is not on earth, for the land of my inheritance is under the sea, under those very waves that now roll within our view; and, in truth, you are as well qualified for a prince as I am for a princess, and have about as valuable a dominion in the mists and the clouds as I have under the waters.'

Her eyes sparkled with affectionate playfulness, while her long black hair floated loosely in the breeze that pressed the folds of her drapery against the matchless symmetry of her form.

'Oh, maid!' said Taliesin, 'what shall I do to win your love?'

'Restore me my father,' said Melanghel, with a seriousness as winning as her playfulness had been fascinating.

'That will I do,' said Taliesin, 'for his own sake. What shall I do for yours?'

'Nothing more,' said Melanghel, and she held out her hand to the youthful bard. Taliesin seized it with rapture, and pressed it to his lips; then, still grasping her hand, and throwing his left arm round her, he pressed his lips to hers.

Melanghel started from him, blushing, and looked at him a moment with something like severity; but he blushed as much as she did, and seemed even more alarmed at her displeasure than she was at his momentary audacity. She reassured him with a smile; and, pointing her spear in the direction of her distant home, she bounded before him down the rock.

This was the kiss of Taliesin to the daughter of Elphin, which is celebrated in an inedited triad, as one of 'the Three Chaste Kisses of the island of Britain.'

CHAPTER IX

THE SONGS OF DIGANWY

Three things that will always swallow, and never be satisfied: the sea; a burial ground; and a king.
TRIADS OF WISDOM.

THE hall of Maelgon Gwyneth was ringing with music and revelry, when Taliesin stood on the floor, with his harp, in the midst of the assembly, and, without introduction or preface, struck a few chords, that, as if by magic, suspended all other sounds, and fixed the attention of all in silent expectation. He then sang as follows:

CANU Y MEDD

THE MEAD SONG

OF TALIESIN

The King of kings upholds the heaven,
And parts from earth the billowy sea:
By Him all earthly joys are given;
He loves the just, and guards the free.
Round the wide hall, for thine and thee,
With purest draughts the mead-horns foam,
Maelgon of Gwyneth! Can it be
That here a prince bewails his home?

The bee tastes not the sparkling draught
Which mortals from his toils obtain;
That sends, in festal circles quaffed,
Sweet tumult through the heart and brain.
The timid, while the horn they drain,
Grow bold; the happy more rejoice;
The mourner ceases to complain;
The gifted bard exalts his voice.

To royal Elphin life I owe,
Nurture and name, the harp, and mead:
Full, pure, and sparkling be their flow,
The horns to Maelgon's lips decreed:
For him may horn to horn succeed,
Till, glowing with their generous fire,
He bid the captive chief be freed,
Whom at his hands my songs require.

Elphin has given me store of mead,
Mead, ale, and wine, and fish, and corn;
A happy home; a splendid steed,
Which stately trappings well adorn.
Tomorrow be the auspicious morn
That home the expected chief shall lead;
So may King Maelgon drain the horn
In thrice three million feasts of mead.

'I give you,' said Maelgon, 'all the rights of hospitality, and as many horns as you please of the mead you so well and justly extol. If you be Elphin's bard, it must be confessed he spoke truth with respect to you, for you are a much better bard than any of mine, as they are all free to confess: I give them that liberty.'

The bards availed themselves of the royal indulgence, and confessed their own inferiority to Taliesin, as the king had commanded them to do. Whether they were all as well convinced of it as they professed to be, may be left to the decision of that very large class of literary gentlemen who are in the habit of favoring the reading public with their undisguised opinions.

'But,' said Maelgon, 'your hero of Caredigion indulged himself in a very unjustifiable bravado with respect to his queen; for he said she was as beautiful and as chaste as mine. Now Rhûn has proved the contrary, with small trouble, and brought away trophies of his triumph; yet still

Elphin persists in his first assertion, wherein he grossly disparages the queen of Gwyneth; and for this I hold him in bondage, and will do, till he make recantation.'

'That he will never do,' said Taliesin. 'Your son received only the favors of a handmaid, who was willing, by stratagem, to preserve her lady from violence. The real Angharad was concealed in a cavern.'

Taliesin explained the adventure of Rhûn, and pronounced an eulogium on Angharad, which put the king and prince into a towering passion.

Rhûn secretly determined to set forth on a second quest; and Maelgon swore by his mead-horn he would keep Elphin till doomsday. Taliesin struck his harp again, and, in a tone of deep but subdued feeling, he poured forth the

SONG OF THE WIND [1]

The winds that wander far and free,
Bring whispers from the shores they sweep;
Voices of feast and revelry;
Murmurs of forests and the deep;

Low sounds of torrents from the steep
Descending on the flooded vale;
And tumults from the leaguered keep,
Where foes the dizzy rampart scale.

[1] This poem has little or nothing of Taliesin's Canu y Gwynt, with the exception of the title. That poem is apparently a fragment; and, as it now stands, is an incoherent and scarcely-intelligible rhapsody. It contains no distinct or explicit idea, except the proposition that it is an unsafe booty to carry off fat kine, which may be easily conceded in a case where nimbleness of heel, both in man and beast, must have been of great importance. The idea from which, if from any thing in the existing portion of the poem, it takes its name, that the whispers of the wind bring rumors of war from Deheubarth, is rather implied than expressed.

The whispers of the wandering wind
Are borne to gifted ears alone;
For them it ranges unconfined,
And speaks in accents of its own.

It tells me of Deheubarth's throne;
The spider weaves not in its shield: [1]
Already from its towers is blown
The blast that bids the spoiler yield.

Ill with his prey the fox may wend,
When the young lion quits his lair:
Sharp sword, strong shield, stout arm, should tend
On spirits that unjustly dare.
To me the wandering breezes bear
The war-blast from Caer Lleon's brow;
The avenging storm is brooding there
To which Diganwy's towers shall bow.

[1] The spider weaving in suspended armour, is an old emblem of peace and inaction. Thus Bacchylides, in his fragment on Peace:

Ἐν δὲ σιδαροδέτοις πόρπαξιν
Αἰθᾶν ἀραχνᾶν ἔργα πέλονται.

Euripides, in a fragment of Erechtheus:

Κείσθω δόρυ μοι μίτον ἀμφιπλέκειν
Ἀράχναις.

And Nonnus, whom no poetical image escaped (*Dionysiaca*, L. xxxviii):

Οὐ φόνος, οὐ τότε δῆρις· ἔκειτο δὲ τηλίθι χάρμης
Βακχιὰς ἐξαέτηρος ἀραχνιόωσα βοείη.

And Beaumont and Fletcher, in the Wife for a Month:

'Would'st thou live so long, till thy sword hung by,
And lazy spiders filled the hilt with cobwebs?'

A Persian poet says, describing ruins:

'The spider spreads the veil in the palace of the Cæsars.'

And among the most felicitous uses of this emblem, must never be forgotten Hogarth's cobweb over the lid of the charity-box.

'If the wind talks to you,' said Maelgon, 'I may say, with the proverb, you talk to the wind; for I am not to be sung, or cajoled, or vapored, or bullied out of my prisoner. And as to your war-blasts from Caer Lleon, which I construe into a threat that you will stir up King Arthur against me, I can tell you for your satisfaction, and to spare you the trouble of going so far, that he has enough to do with seeking his wife, who has been carried off by some unknown marauder, and with fighting the Saxons, to have much leisure or inclination to quarrel with a true Briton, who is one of his best friends, and his heir presumptive; for, though he is a man of great prowess, and moreover, saving his reverence and your presence, a cuckold, he has not yet favored his kingdom with an heir apparent. And I request you to understand, that when I extolled you above my bards, I did so only in respect of your verse and voice, melody and execution, figure and action, in short, of your manner; for your matter is naught; and I must do my own bards the justice to say, that, however much they may fall short of you in the requisites aforesaid, they know much better than you do, what is fitting for bards to sing, and kings to hear.'

The bards, thus encouraged, recovered from the first shock of Maelgon's ready admission of Taliesin's manifest superiority, and struck up a sort of consecutive chorus, in a series of pennillion, or stanzas, in praise of Maelgon and his heirship presumptive, giving him credit for all the virtues of which the reputation was then in fashion; and, amongst the rest, they very loftily celebrated his justice and magnanimity.

Taliesin could not reconcile his notions of these qualities with Maelgon's treatment of Elphin. He changed his measure and his melody, and pronounced, in impassioned numbers, the poem which a learned Welsh historian calls 'The Indignation of the Bards,' though, as the indignation was Taliesin's, and not theirs, he seems to have made a small mistake in regard to the preposition.

THE INDIGNATION OF TALIESIN

WITH THE

BARDS OF MAELGON GWYNETH

False bards the sacred fire pervert,
Whose songs are won without desert;
Who falsehoods weave in specious lays,
To gild the base with virtue's praise.

From court to court, from tower to tower,
In warrior's tent, in lady's bower,
For gold, for wine, for food, for fire,
They tune their throats at all men's hire.

Their harps re-echo wide and far
With sensual love, and bloody war,
And drunkenness, and flattering lies:
Truth's light may shine for other eyes.

In palaces they still are found,
At feasts, promoting senseless sound:
He is their demigod at least,
Whose only virtue is his feast

They love to talk; they hate to think;
All day they sing; all night they drink:
No useful toils their hands employ;
In boisterous throngs is all their joy.

The bird will fly, the fish will swim,
The bee the honied flowers will skim;
Its food by toil each creature brings,
Except false bards and worthless kings.

Learning and wisdom claim to find
Homage and succour from mankind;
But learning's right, and wisdom's due,
Are falsely claimed by slaves like you.

True bards know truth, and truth will show
Ye know it not, nor care to know:
Your king's weak mind false judgment warps;
Rebuke his wrong, or break your harps.

I know the mountain and the plain;
I know where right and justice reign;
I from the tower will Elphin free:
Your king shall learn his doom from me.

A spectre of the marsh shall rise,
With yellow teeth, and hair, and eyes,
From whom your king in vain aloof
Shall crouch beneath the sacred roof.

He through the half-closed door shall spy
The Yellow Spectre sweeping by;
To whom the punishment belongs
Of Maelgon's crimes and Elphin's wrongs.

By the name of the Yellow Spectre, Taliesin designated a pestilence, which afterwards carried off great multitudes of the people, and, amongst them, Maelgon Gwyneth, then sovereign of Britain, who had taken refuge from it in a church.

Maelgon paid little attention to Taliesin's prophecy, but he was much incensed by the general tenor of his song.

'If it were not,' said Maelgon, 'that I do not choose to add to the number of the crimes of which you so readily accuse me, that of disregarding the inviolability of your bardship, I would send you to keep company with your trout-catching king, and

you might amuse his salmon-salting majesty with telling him as much truth as he is disposed to listen to; which, to judge by his reception of Rhûn's story of his wife, I take to be exceedingly little. For the present, you are welcome to depart; and, if you are going to Caer Lleon, you may present my respects to King Arthur, and tell him, I hope he will beat the Saxons, and find his wife; but I hope, also, that the cutting me off with an heir apparent will not be the consequence of his finding her, or (which, by the by, is more likely,) of his having lost her.'

Taliesin took his departure from the hall of Diganwy, leaving the bards biting their lips at his rebuke, and Maelgon roaring with laughter at his own very excellent jest.

CHAPTER X

THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF RHUN

Παρθένε, πῶς μετάμειψας ἐρευθαλέην σέο μορφήν;
Εἰαρινὴν δ'ἀκτῖνα τίς ἔσβεσε σεῖο προσώπου;
Οὐκέτι σῶν μελέων ἀμαρύσσεται ἄργυφος αἴγλη·
Οὐκέτι δ', ὡς τὸ πρόσθε, τεαὶ γελόωσιν ὀπωπαί.

Sweet maid, what grief has changed thy roseate grace,
And quenched the vernal sunshine of thy face?
No more thy light form sparkles as it flies,
Nor laughter flashes from thy radiant eyes.

VENUS TO PASITHEA, *in the 33d Book of the* DIONYSIACA OF NONNUS.

TALIESIN returned to the dwelling of Elphin, auguring that, in consequence of his information, Rhûn would pay it another visit. In this anticipation he was not mistaken, for Rhûn very soon appeared, with a numerous retinue, determined,

apparently, to carry his point by force of arms. He found, however, no inmate in the dwelling but Taliesin and Teithrin ap Tathral.

Rhûn stormed, entreated, promised, and menaced, without success. He perlustrated the vicinity, and found various caverns, but not the one he sought. He passed many days in the search, and, finally, departed; but, at a short distance, he dismissed all his retinue, except his bard of all work, or laureate expectant, and, accompanied by this worthy, returned to the banks of the Mawddach, where they resolved themselves into an ambuscade. It was not long before they saw Taliesin issue from the dwelling, and begin ascending the hill. They followed him, at a cautious distance; first up a steep ascent of the forest-covered rocks; then along a small space of densely-wooded tableland, to the edge of a dingle; and, again, by a slight descent, to the bed of a mountain stream, in a spot where the torrent flung itself, in a series of cataracts, down the rift of a precipitous rock, that towered high above their heads. About half-way up the rock, near the base of one of these cataracts, was a projecting ledge, or natural platform of rock, behind which was seen the summit of the opening of a cave. Taliesin paused, and looked around him, as if to ascertain that he was unobserved; and then, standing on a projection of the rock below, he mingled, in spontaneous song, the full power of his voice with the roar of the waters.

TALIESIN.

Maid of the rock! though loud the flood,
My voice will pierce thy cell:
No foe is in the mountain wood;
No danger in the dell:

The torrents bound along the glade ;
Their path is free and bright ;
Be thou as they, oh mountain maid !
In liberty and light.

Melanghel appeared on the rocky platform, and answered the song of her lover :

MELANGHEL.

The cataracts thunder down the steep ;
The woods all lonely wave :
Within my heart the voice sinks deep
That calls me from my cave.
The voice is dear, the song is sweet,
And true the words must be :
Well pleased I quit the dark retreat,
To wend away with thee.

TALIESIN.

Not yet ; not yet : let nightdews fall,
And stars be bright above,
Ere to her long deserted hall
I guide my gentle love.
When torchlight flashes on the roof,
No foe will near thee stray :
Even now his parting courser's hoof
Rings from the rocky way.

MELANGHEL.

Yet climb the path, and comfort speak,
To cheer the lonely cave,
Where woods are bare, and rocks are bleak,
And wintry torrents rave.
A dearer home my memory knows,
A home I still deplore ;
Where firelight glows, while winds and snows
Assail the guardian door.

Taliesin vanished a moment from the sight of Rhûn, and almost immediately reappeared by the side of Melanghel, who had now been joined by her mother. In a few minutes she returned, and Angharad and Melanghel withdrew.

Rhûn watched him from the dingle, and then proceeded to investigate the path by which he had gained the platform. After some search he discovered it, ascended to the platform, and rushed into the cavern.

They here found a blazing fire, a half-finished dinner, materials of spinning and embroidering, and other signs of female inhabitancy; but they found not the inhabitants. They searched the cavern to its depth, which was not inconsiderable; much marvelling how the ladies had vanished. While thus engaged, they heard a rushing sound, and a crash on the rocks, as of some ponderous body. The mystery of this noise was very soon explained to them, in a manner that gave an unusual length to their faces, and threw a deep tinge of blue into their rosy complexions. A ponderous stone, which had been suspended like a portcullis at the mouth of the cavern, had been dropped by some unseen agency, and made them as close prisoners as Elphin.

They were not long kept in suspense as to how this matter had been managed. The hoarse voice of Teithrin ap Tathral sounded in their ears from without, 'Foxes! you have been seen through, and you are fairly trapped. Eat and drink. You shall want nothing but to get out; which you must want some time; for it is sworn that no hand but Elphin's shall raise the stone of your captivity.'

'Let me out,' vociferated Rhûn, 'and on the word of a prince—' but, before he could finish the sentence, the retreating steps of Teithrin were lost in the roar of the torrent.

CHAPTER XI

THE HEROES OF DINAS VAWR

L'ombra sua torna ch'era dipartita.

DANTE.

While there is life there is hope.

ENGLISH PROVERB.

PRINCE RHUN being safe in schistous bastile, Taliesin commenced his journey to the court of King Arthur. On his way to Caer Lleon, he was received with all hospitality, entertained with all admiration, and dismissed with all honour, at the castles of several petty kings, and, amongst the rest, at the castle of Dinas Vawr, on the Towy, which was then garrisoned by King Melvas, who had marched with a great force out of his own kingdom, on the eastern shores of the Severn, to levy contributions in the country to the westward, where, as the pleasure of his company had been altogether unlooked for, he had got possession of a good portion of moveable property. The castle of Dinas Vawr presenting itself to him as a convenient hold, he had taken it by storm ; and having cut the throats of the former occupants, thrown their bodies into the Towy, and caused a mass to be sung for the good of their souls, he was now sitting over his bowl, with the comfort of a good conscience, enjoying the fruits of the skill and courage with which he had planned and accomplished his scheme of ways and means for the year.

The hall of Melvas was full of magnanimous heroes, who were celebrating their own exploits in sundry chorusses, especially in that which follows,

which is here put upon record as being the quintessence of all the war-songs that ever were written, and the sum and substance of all the appetencies, tendencies, and consequences of military glory :

THE WAR-SONG OF DINAS VAWR

The mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter ;
We therefore deemed it meeter
To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition ;
We met a host, and quelled it ;
We forced a strong position,
And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us ;
We met them, and o'erthrew them :
They struggled hard to beat us ;
But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
The king marched forth to catch us :
His rage surpassed all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars ;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sacked his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewild'ring,
Spilt blood enough to swim in :
We orphaned many children,
And widowed many women.
The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen ;
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearmen and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoaned them,
Two thousand head of cattle,
And the head of him who owned them:
Ednyfed, king of Dyfed,
His head was borne before us;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow, our chorus.

As the doughty followers of Melvas, having sung themselves hoarse with their own praises, subsided one by one into drunken sleep, Taliesin, sitting near the great central fire, and throwing around a scrutinizing glance on all the objects in the hall, noticed a portly and somewhat elderly personage, of an aspect that would have been venerable, if it had been less rubicund and Bacchic, who continued plying his potations with undiminished energy, while the heroes of the festival dropped round him, like the leaves of autumn. This figure excited Taliesin's curiosity. The features struck him with a sense of resemblance to objects which had been somewhere familiar to him; but he perplexed himself in vain, with attempts at definite recollections. At length, when these two were almost the sole survivors of the evening, the stranger approached him with a golden goblet, which he had just replenished with the choicest wine of the vaults of Dinas Vawr, and pronounced the oracular monosyllable, 'Drink!' to which he subjoined emphatically 'Gwin o eur: Wine from gold. That is my taste. Ale is well; mead is better; wine is best. Horn is well; silver is better; gold is best.'

Taliesin, who had been very abstemious during the evening, took the golden goblet, and drank to please the inviter; in the hope that he would

become communicative, and satisfy the curiosity his appearance had raised.

The stranger sat down near him, evidently in that amiable state of semi-intoxication which inflates the head, warms the heart, lifts up the veil of the inward man, and sets the tongue flying, or rather tripping, in the double sense of nimbleness and titubancy.

The stranger repeated, taking a copious draught, 'My taste is wine from gold.'

'I have heard those words,' said Taliesin, 'GWIN O EUR, repeated as having been the favorite saying of a person whose memory is fondly cherished by one as dear to me as a mother, though his name, with all others, is the by-word of all that is disreputable.'

'I cannot believe,' said the stranger, 'that a man whose favorite saying was GWIN O EUR could possibly be a disreputable person, or deserve any other than that honourable remembrance, which, you say, only one person is honest enough to entertain for him.'

'His name,' said Taliesin, 'is too unhappily notorious throughout Britain, by the terrible catastrophe of which his GWIN O EUR was the cause.'

'And what might that be?' said the stranger.

'The inundation of Gwaelod,' said Taliesin.

'You speak then,' said the stranger, taking an enormous potation, 'of Seithenyn, Prince Seithenyn, Seithenyn ap Seithin Saidi, Arglwyd Gorwarcheidwad yr Argae Breninawl.'

'I seldom hear his name,' said Taliesin, 'with any of those sounding additions; he is usually called Seithenyn the Drunkard.'

The stranger goggled about his eyes in an attempt to fix them steadily on Taliesin, screwed up the corners of his mouth, stuck out his nether lip, pursed up his chin, thrust forward his right foot, and elevated his golden goblet in his right hand; then, in a tone which he intended to be strongly becoming of his impressive aspect and imposing attitude, he muttered, 'Look at me.'

Taliesin looked at him accordingly, with as much gravity as he could preserve.

After a silence, which he designed to be very dignified and solemn, the stranger spoke again: 'I am the man.'

'What man?' said Taliesin.

'The man,' replied his entertainer, 'of whom you have spoken so disparagingly; Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi.'

'Seithenyn,' said Taliesin, 'has slept twenty years under the waters of the western sea, as King Gwythno's Lamentations have made known to all Britain.'

'They have not made it known to me,' said Seithenyn, 'for the best of all reasons, that one can only know the truth; for, if that which we think we know is not truth, it is something which we do not know. A man cannot know his own death; for, while he knows any thing, he is alive; at least, I never heard of a dead man who knew any thing, or pretended to know any thing: if he had so pretended, I should have told him to his face he was no dead man.'

'Your mode of reasoning,' said Taliesin, 'unquestionably corresponds with what I have heard of Seithenyn's: but how is it possible Seithenyn can be living?'

'Every thing that is, is possible, says Catog the Wise;' answered Seithenyn, with a look of great sapience. 'I will give you proof that I am not a dead man; for, they say, dead men tell no tales: now I will tell you a tale, and a very interesting one it is. When I saw the sea sapping the tower, I jumped into the water, and just in the nick of time. It was well for me that I had been so provident as to empty so many barrels, and that somebody, I don't know who, but I suppose it was my daughter, had been so provident as to put the bungs into them, to keep them sweet; for the beauty of it was that, when there was so much water in the case, it kept them empty; and when I jumped into the sea, the sea was just making a great hole in the cellar, and they were floating out by dozens. I don't know how I managed it, but I got one arm over one, and the other arm over another: I nipped them pretty tight; and, though my legs were under water, the good liquor I had in me kept me warm. I could not help thinking, as I had nothing else to think of just then that touched me so nearly, that if I had left them full, and myself empty, as a sober man would have done, we should all three, that is, I and the two barrels, have gone to the bottom together, that is to say, separately; for we should never have come together, except at the bottom, perhaps; when no one of us could have done the other any good; whereas they have done me much good, and I have requited it; for, first, I did them the service of emptying them; and then they did me the service of floating me with the tide, whether the ebb, or the flood, or both, is more than I can tell, down to the coast of Dyfed, where I was

picked up by fishermen ; and such was my sense of gratitude, that, though I had always before detested an empty barrel, except as a trophy, I swore I would not budge from the water unless my two barrels went with me ; so we were all marched inland together, and were taken into the service of King Ednyfed, where I stayed till his castle was sacked, and his head cut off, and his beeves marched away with, by the followers of King Melvas, of whom I killed two or three ; but they were too many for us : therefore, to make the best of a bad bargain, I followed leisurely in the train of the beeves, and presented myself to King Melvas, with this golden goblet, saying GWIN O EUR. He was struck with my deportment, and made me his chief butler ; and now my two barrels are the two pillars of his cellar, where I regularly fill them from affection, and as regularly empty them from gratitude, taking care to put the bungs in them, to keep them sweet.'

' But all this while,' said Taliesin, ' did you never look back to the Plain of Gwaelod, to your old king, and, above all, to your daughter ? '

' Why yes,' said Seithenyn, ' I did in a way ! But as to the Plain of Gwaelod, that was gone, buried under the sea, along with many good barrels, which I had been improvident enough to leave full : then, as to the old king, though I had a great regard for him, I thought he might be less likely to feast me in his hall, than to set up my head on a spike over his gate : then, as to my daughter—'

Here he shook his head, and looked maudlin ; and dashing two or three drops from his eye, he put a great many into his mouth.

' Your daughter,' said Taliesin, ' is the wife of

King Elphin, and has a daughter, who is now as beautiful as her mother was.'

'Very likely,' said Seithenyn, 'and I should be very glad to see them all; but I am afraid King Elphin, as you call him, (what he is king of, you shall tell me at leisure,) would do me a mischief. At any rate, he would stint me in liquor. No! If they will visit me, here I am. Fish, and water, will not agree with me. I am growing old, and need cordial nutriment. King Melvas will never want for beeves and wine; nor, indeed, for any thing else that is good. I can tell you what,' he added, in a very low voice, cocking his eye, and putting his finger on his lips, 'he has got in this very castle the finest woman in Britain.'

'That I doubt,' said Taliesin.

'She is the greatest, at any rate,' said Seithenyn, 'and ought to be the finest.'

'How the greatest?' said Taliesin.

Seithenyn looked round, to observe if there were any listener near, and fixed a very suspicious gaze on a rotund figure of a fallen hero, who lay coiled up like a maggot in a filbert, and snoring with an energy that, to the muddy apprehensions of Seithenyn, seemed to be counterfeit. He determined, by a gentle experiment, to ascertain if his suspicions were well founded; and proceeded, with what he thought great caution, to apply the point of his foot to the most bulging portion of the fat sleeper's circumference. But he greatly miscalculated his intended impetus, for he impinged his foot with a force that overbalanced himself, and hurled him headlong over his man, who instantly sprang on his legs, shouting 'To arms!' Numbers started up at the cry; the hall rang with

the din of arms, and with the vociferation of questions, which there were many to ask, and none to answer. Some stared about for the enemy; some rushed to the gates; others to the walls. Two or three, reeling in the tumult and the darkness, were jostled over the parapet, and went rolling down the precipitous slope of the castle hill, crashing through the bushes, and bellowing for some one to stop them, till their clamours were cut short by a plunge into the Towy, where the conjoint weight of their armour and their liquor carried them at once to the bottom. The rage which would have fallen on the enemy, if there had been one, was turned against the author of the false alarm; but, as none could point him out, the tumult subsided by degrees, through a descending scale of imprecations, into the last murmured malediction of him whom the intensity of his generous anger kept longest awake. By this time, the rotund hero had again coiled himself up into his ring; and Seithenyn was stretched in a right line, as a tangent to the circle, in a state of utter incapacity to elucidate the mystery of King Melvas's possession of the finest woman in Britain.

CHAPTER XII

THE SPLENDOR OF CAER LLEON

The three principal cities of the isle of Britain: Caer Llion upon Wysg in Cymru; Caer Llundain in Lloegr; and Caer Evrawg in Deïfr and Brynaich.[1]

TRIADS OF THE ISLE OF BRITAIN.

THE sunset of a bright December day was glittering on the waves of the Usk, and on the innumerable roofs, which, being composed chiefly of the glazed tiles of the Romans, reflected the light almost as vividly as the river; when Taliesin descended one of the hills that border the beautiful valley in which then stood Caer Lleon, the metropolis of Britain, and in which now stands, on a small portion of the selfsame space, a little insignificant town, possessing nothing of its ancient glory but the unaltered name of Caer Lleon.

The rapid Usk flowed then, as now, under the walls: the high wooden bridge, with its slender piles, was then much the same as it is at this day: it seems to have been never regularly rebuilt, but to have been repaired, from time to time, on the original Roman model. The same green and fertile meadows, the same gently-sloping wood-covered hills, that now meet the eye of the tourist, then met the eye of Taliesin; except that the woods on one side of the valley, were then only the skirts of an extensive forest, which the nobility and beauty of Caer Lleon made frequently re-echo to the clamours of the chace.

[1] Caer Lleon upon Usk in Cambria: London in Leogria: and York in Deïra and Bernicia.

The city, which had been so long the centre of the Roman supremacy, which was now the seat of the most illustrious sovereign that had yet held the sceptre of Britain, could not be approached by the youthful bard, whose genius was destined to eclipse that of all his countrymen, without feelings and reflections of deep interest. The sentimental tourist, (who, perching himself on an old wall, works himself up into a soliloquy of philosophical pathos, on the vicissitudes of empire and the mutability of all sublunary things, interrupted only by an occasional peep at his watch, to ensure his not overstaying the minute at which his fowl, comfortably roasting at the nearest inn, has been promised to be ready,) has, no doubt, many fine thoughts well worth recording in a dapper volume ; but Taliesin had an interest in the objects before him too deep to have a thought to spare, even for his dinner. The monuments of Roman magnificence, and of Roman domination, still existing in comparative freshness ; the arduous struggle, in which his countrymen were then engaged with the Saxons, and which, notwithstanding the actual triumphs of Arthur, Taliesin's prophetic spirit told him would end in their being dispossessed of all the land of Britain, except the wild region of Wales, (a result which political sagacity might have apprehended from their disunion, but which, as he told it to his countrymen in that memorable prophecy which every child of the Cymry knows, has established for him, among them, the fame of a prophet ;) the importance to himself and his benefactors of the objects of his visit to the city, on the result of which depended the liberation of Elphin, and the success of his love for Melanghel ;

the degree in which these objects might be promoted by the construction he had put on Seithenyn's imperfect communication respecting the lady in Dinas Vawr; furnished, altogether, more materials for absorbing thought, than the most zealous peregrinator, even if he be at once poet, antiquary, and philosopher, is likely to have at once in his mind, on the top of the finest old wall on the face of the earth.

Taliesin passed, in deep musing, through the gates of Caer Lleon; but his attention was speedily drawn to the objects around him. From the wild solitudes in which he had passed his earlier years, the transition to the castles and cities he had already visited furnished much food to curiosity: but the ideas of them sunk into comparative nothingness before the magnificence of Caer Lleon.

He did not stop in the gateway to consider the knotty question, which has since puzzled so many antiquaries, whether the name of Caer Lleon signifies the City of Streams, the City of Legions, or the City of King Lleon? He saw a river filled with ships, flowing through fine meadows, bordered by hills and forests; walls of brick, as well as of stone; a castle, of impregnable strength; stately houses, of the most admirable architecture; palaces, with gilded roofs; Roman temples, and Christian churches; a theatre, and an amphitheatre. The public and private buildings of the departed Romans were in excellent preservation; though the buildings, and especially the temples, were no longer appropriated to their original purposes. The king's butler, Bedwyr, had taken possession of the Temple of Diana, as a cool place

of deposit for wine: he had recently effected a stowage of vast quantities therein, and had made a most luminous arrangement of the several kinds; under the judicious and experienced superintendence of Dyvrig, the Ex-Archbishop of Caer Lleon; who had just then nothing else to do, having recently resigned his see in favor of King Arthur's uncle, David, who is, to this day, illustrious as the St. David in whose honour the Welshmen annually adorn their hats with a leek. This David was a very respectable character in his way: he was a man of great sanctity and simplicity; and, in order to eschew the vanities of the world, which were continually present to him in Caer Lleon, he removed the metropolitan see, from Caer Lleon, to the rocky, barren, woodless, streamless, meadowless, tempest-beaten point of Mynyw, which was afterwards called St. David's. He was the mirror and pattern of a godly life; teaching by example, as by precept; admirable in words, and excellent in deeds; tall in stature, handsome in aspect, noble in deportment, affable in address, eloquent and learned, a model to his followers, the life of the poor, the protector of widows, and the father of orphans. This makes altogether a very respectable saint; and it cannot be said, that the honourable leek is unworthily consecrated. A long series of his Catholic successors maintained, in great magnificence, a cathedral, a college, and a palace; keeping them all in repair, and feeding the poor into the bargain, from the archiepiscopal, or, when the primacy of Caer Lleon had merged in that of Canterbury, from the episcopal, revenues: but these things were reformed altogether by one of the first Protestant

bishops, who, having a lady that longed for the gay world, and wanting more than all the revenues for himself and his family, first raised the wind by selling off the lead from the roof of his palace, and then obtained permission to remove from it, on the plea that it was not watertight. The immediate successors of this bishop, whose name was Barlow, were in every way worthy of him; the palace and college have, consequently, fallen into incurable dilapidation, and the cathedral has fallen partially into ruins, and, most impartially, into neglect and defacement.

To return to Taliesin, in the streets of Caer Lleon. Plautus and Terence were not heard in the theatre, nor to be heard of in its neighbourhood; but it was thought an excellent place for an Eisteddfod, or Bardic Congress, and was made the principal place of assembly of the Bards of the island of Britain. This is what Ross of Warwick means, when he says there was a noble university of students in Caer Lleon.

The mild precepts of the new religion had banished the ferocious sports to which the Romans had dedicated the amphitheatre, and, as Taliesin passed, it was pouring forth an improved and humanized multitude, who had been enjoying the pure British pleasure of baiting a bear.

The hot baths and aqueducts, the stoves of 'wonderful artifice,' as Giraldus has it, which diffused hot air through narrow spiracles, and many other wonders of the place, did not all present themselves to a first observation. The streets were thronged with people, especially of the fighting order, of whom a greater number flocked about Arthur, than he always found it convenient to pay.

Horsemen, with hawks and hounds, were returning from the neighbouring forest, accompanied by beautiful huntresses, in scarlet and gold.

Taliesin, having perlustrated the city, proceeded to the palace of Arthur. At the gates he was challenged by a formidable guard, but passed by his bardic privilege. It was now very near Christmas, and when Taliesin entered the great hall, it was blazing with artificial light, and glowing with the heat of the Roman stoves.

Arthur had returned victorious from the great battle of Badon hill, in which he had slain with his own hand four hundred and forty Saxons; and was feasting as merrily as an honest man can be supposed to do while his wife is away. Kings, princes, and soldiers of fortune, bards and prelates, ladies superbly apparelled, and many of them surpassingly beautiful; and a most gallant array of handsome young cupbearers, marshalled and well drilled by the king's butler, Bedwyr, who was himself a petty king, were the chief components of the illustrious assembly.

Amongst the ladies were the beautiful Tegau Eurvron; Dywir the Golden-haired; Enid, the daughter of Yniwl; Garwen, the daughter of Henyn; Gwyl, the daughter of Enddaud; and Indeg, the daughter of Avarwy Hir, of Maelienydd. Of these, Tegau Eurvron, or Tegau of the Golden Bosom, was the wife of Caradoc, and one of the Three Chaste Wives of the island of Britain. She is the heroine, who, as the lady of Sir Cradock, is distinguished above all the ladies of Arthur's court, in the ballad of the Boy and the Mantle.

Amongst the bards were Prince Llywarch, then in his youth, afterwards called Llywarch Hên, or

Llywarch the Aged; Aneurin, the British Homer, who sang the fatal battle of Cattraëth, which laid the foundation of the Saxon ascendancy, in heroic numbers, which the gods have preserved to us, and who was called the Monarch of the Bards, before the days of the glory of Taliesin; and Merddin Gwyllt, or Merlin the Wild, who was so deep in the secrets of nature, that he obtained the fame of a magician, to which he had at least as good a title as either Friar Bacon or Cornelius Agrippa.

Amongst the petty kings, princes, and soldiers of fortune, were twenty-four marchawg, or cavaliers, who were the counsellors and champions of Arthur's court. This was the heroic band, illustrious, in the songs of chivalry, as the Knights of the Round Table. Their names and pedigrees would make a very instructive and entertaining chapter; and would include the interesting characters of Gwalchmai ap Gwyar the Courteous, the nephew of Arthur; Caradoc, 'Colofn Cymry,' the Pillar of Cambria, whose lady, as above noticed, was the mirror of chastity; and Trystan ap Tallwch, the lover of the beautiful Essyllt, the daughter, or, according to some, the wife, of his uncle March ap Meirchion; persons known to all the world, as Sir Gawain, Sir Cradock, and Sir Tristram.

On the right hand of King Arthur sate the beautiful Indeg, and on his left the lovely Garwen. Taliesin advanced, along the tesselated floor, towards the upper end of the hall, and, kneeling before King Arthur, said, 'What boon will King Arthur grant to him who brings news of his queen?'

'Any boon,' said Arthur, 'that a king can give.'

'Queen Gwenyvar,' said Taliesin, 'is the prisoner of King Melvas, in the castle of Dinas Vawr.'

The mien and countenance of his informant satisfied the king that he knew what he was saying; therefore, without further parlance, he broke up the banquet, to make preparations for assailing Dinas Vawr.

But, before he began his march, King Melvas had shifted his quarters, and passed beyond the Severn to the isle of Avallon, where the marshes and winter-floods assured him some months of tranquillity and impunity.

King Arthur was highly exasperated, on receiving the intelligence of Melvas's movement; but he had no remedy, and was reduced to the alternative of making the best of his Christmas with the ladies, princes, and bards who crowded his court.

The period of the winter solstice had been always a great festival with the northern nations, the commencement of the lengthening of the days being, indeed, of all points in the circle of the year, that in which the inhabitants of cold countries have most cause to rejoice. This great festival was anciently called Yule; whether derived from the Gothic *Iola*, to make merry; or from the Celtic *Hiaul*, the sun; or from the Danish and Swedish *Hiul*, signifying wheel or revolution, December being *Hiul-month*, or the month of return; or from the Cimbric word *Ol*, which has the important signification of ALE, is too knotty a controversy to be settled here: but Yule had been long a great festival, with both Celts and Saxons; and, with the change of religion, became the great festival of Christmas, retaining most of its ancient characteristics while England was Merry

England; a phrase which must be a mirifical puzzle to any one who looks for the first time on its present most lugubrious inhabitants.

The misletoe of the oak was gathered by the Druids with great ceremonies, as a symbol of the season. The misletoe continued to be so gathered, and to be suspended in halls and kitchens, if not in temples, implying an unlimited privilege of kissing; which circumstance, probably, led a learned antiquary to opine that it was the forbidden fruit.

The Druids, at this festival, made, in a capacious cauldron, a mystical brewage of carefully-selected ingredients, full of occult virtues, which they kept from the profane, and which was typical of the new year and of the transmigration of the soul. The profane, in humble imitation, brewed a bowl of spiced ale, or wine, throwing therein roasted crabs; the hissing of which, as they plunged, piping hot, into the liquor, was heard with much unction at midwinter, as typical of the conjunct benignant influences of fire and strong drink. The Saxons called this the Wassail-bowl, and the brewage of it is reported to have been one of the charms with which Rowena fascinated Vortigern.

King Arthur kept his Christmas so merrily, that the memory of it passed into a proverb:[1] 'As merry as Christmas in Caer Lleon.'

Caer Lleon was the merriest of places, and was commonly known by the name of Merry Caer Lleon; which the English ballad-makers, for the sake of the smoother sound, and confounding Cambria with Cumbria, most ignorantly or audaciously turned into Merry Carlisle; thereby

[1] Mor llawen ag Ngdolig yn Nghaerlleon.

emboldening a northern antiquary to set about proving that King Arthur was a Scotchman; according to the old principles of harry and foray, which gave Scotchmen a right to whatever they could find on the English border; though the English never admitted their title to any thing there, excepting a halter in Carlisle.

The chace, in the neighbouring forest; tilting in the amphitheatre; trials of skill in archery, in throwing the lance and riding at the quintain, and similar amusements of the morning, created good appetites for the evening feasts; in which Prince Cei, who is well known as Sir Kay, the seneschal, superintended the viands, as King Bedwyr did the liquor; having each a thousand men at command, for their provision, arrangement, and distribution; and music worthy of the banquet was provided and superintended by the king's chief harper, Geraint, of whom a contemporary poet observes, that when he died, the gates of heaven were thrown wide open, to welcome the ingress of so divine a musician.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GHOSTLINESS OF AVALLON

Poco più, poco meno, tutti al mondo vivono d'impostura: e chi è di buon gusto, dissimula quando occorre, gode quando può, crede quel che vuole, ride de' pazzi, e figura un mondo a suo gusto. GOLDONI.

'WHERE is the young bard,' said King Arthur, after some nights of Christmas had passed by, 'who brought me the news of my queen, and to whom I promised a boon, which he has not yet claimed?'

None could satisfy the king's curiosity. Taliesin had disappeared from Caer Lleon. He knew the power and influence of Maelgon Gwyneth; and he was aware that King Arthur, however favorably he might receive his petition, would not find leisure to compel the liberation of Elphin, till he had enforced from Melvas the surrender of his queen. It occurred to him that her restoration might be effected by peaceable means; and he knew that, if he could be in any degree instrumental to this result, it would greatly strengthen his claims on the king. He engaged a small fishing-vessel, which had just landed a cargo for the Christmas feasts of Caer Lleon, and set sail for the isle of Avallon. At that period, the springtides of the sea rolled round a cluster of islands, of which Avallon was one, over the extensive fens, which wiser generations have embanked and reclaimed.

The abbey of Avallon, afterwards called Glastonbury, was, even then, a comely and commodious pile, though not possessing any of that magnificence which the accumulated wealth of ages subsequently gave to it. A large and strongly fortified castle, almost adjoining the abbey, gave to the entire place the air of a strong hold of the church militant. King Melvas was one of the pillars of the orthodoxy of those days: he was called the Scourge of the Pelagians; and extended the shield of his temporal might over the spiritual brotherhood of Avallon, who, in return, made it a point of conscience not to stint him in absolutions.

Some historians pretend that a comfortable nunnery was erected at a convenient distance from the abbey, that is to say, close to it; but

this involves a nice question in monastic antiquity, which the curious may settle for themselves.

It was about midway between nones and vespers when Taliesin sounded, on the gate of the abbey, a notice of his wish for admission. A small trap-door in the gate was cautiously opened, and a face, as round and as red as the setting sun in November, shone forth in the aperture.

The topographers who have perplexed themselves about the origin of the name of Ynys Avallon, 'the island of apples,' had not the advantage of this piece of meteoroscopy: if they could have looked on this archetype of a Norfolk beefin, with the knowledge that it was only a sample of a numerous fraternity, they would at once have perceived the fitness of the appellation. The brethren of Avallon were the apples of the church. It was the oldest monastic establishment in Britain; and consequently, as of reason, the most plump, succulent, and rosy. It had, even in the sixth century, put forth the fruits of good living, in a manner that would have done honour to a more enlightened age. It went on steadily improving in this line till the days of its last abbot, Richard Whiting, who built the stupendous kitchen, which has withstood the ravages of time and the Reformation; and who, as appears by authentic documents, and, amongst others, by a letter signed with the honoured name of Russell, was found guilty, by a right worshipful jury, of being suspected of great riches, and of an inclination to keep them; and was accordingly sentenced to be hanged forthwith, along with his treasurer and subtreasurer, who were charged with aiding and abetting him in the safe custody of his cash and

plate ; at the same time that the Abbot of Peterborough was specially reprieved from the gallows, on the ground that he was the said Russell's particular friend. This was a compendium of justice and mercy according to the new light of King Henry the Eighth. The abbot's kitchen is the most interesting and perfect portion of the existing ruins. These ruins were overgrown with the finest ivy in England, till it was, not long since, pulled down by some Vandal, whom the Society of Antiquaries had sent down to make drawings of the walls, which he executed literally, by stripping them bare, that he might draw the walls, and nothing else. Its shade no longer waves over the musing moralist, who, with folded arms, and his back against a wall, dreams of the days that are gone ; or the sentimental cockney, who, seating himself with much gravity on a fallen column, produces a flute from his pocket, and strikes up ' I'd be a butterfly.'

From the phænomenon of a blushing fruit that was put forth in the abbey gate of Avallon issued a deep, fat, gurgling voice, which demanded of Taliesin his name and business.

' I seek the abbot of Avallon,' said Taliesin.

' He is confessing a penitent,' said the ghostly brother, who was officiating in turn as porter.

' I can await his leisure,' said Taliesin, ' but I must see him.'

' Are you alone ? ' said the brother.

' I am,' said Taliesin.

The gate unclosed slowly, just wide enough to give him admittance. It was then again barred and barricadoed.

The ghostly brother, of whom Taliesin had now

a full view, had a figure corresponding with his face, and wanted nothing but a pair of horns and a beard in ringlets, to look like an avatar of Bacchus. He maintained, however, great gravity of face, and decorum of gesture, as he said to Taliesin, 'Hospitality is the rule of our house; but we are obliged to be cautious in these times, though we live under powerful protection. Those bloody Nimrods, the Saxons, are athirst for the blood of the righteous. Monsters that are born with tails.'

Taliesin had not before heard of this feature of Saxon conformation, and expressed his astonishment accordingly.

'How?' said the monk. 'Did not a rabble of them fasten goats' tails to the robe of the blessed preacher in Riw, and did he not, therefore, pray that their posterity might be born with tails? And it is so. But let that pass. Have they not sacked monasteries, plundered churches, and put holy brethren to the sword? The blood of the saints calls for vengeance.'

'And will have it,' said Taliesin, 'from the hand of Arthur.'

The name of Arthur evidently discomposed the monk, who, desiring Taliesin to follow him, led the way across the hall of the abbey, and along a short wide passage, at the end of which was a portly door.

The monk disappeared through this door, and, presently returning, said, 'The abbot requires your name and quality.'

'Taliesin, the bard of Elphin ap Gwythno Garanhir,' was the reply.

The monk disappeared again, and, returning,

after a longer pause than before, said, 'You may enter.'

The abbot was a plump and comely man, of middle age, having three roses in his complexion; one in full blossom on each cheek, and one in bud on the tip of his nose.

He was sitting at a small table, on which stood an enormous vase, and a golden goblet; and opposite to him sat the penitent of whom the round-faced brother had spoken, and in whom Taliesin recognised his acquaintance of Dinas Vawr, who called himself Seithenyn ap Seithyn.

The abbot and Seithenyn sat with their arms folded on the table, leaning forward towards each other, as if in momentous discussion.

The abbot said to Taliesin, 'Sit;' and to his conductor, 'Retire, and be silent.'

'Will it not be better,' said the monk, 'that I cross my lips with the sign of secrecy?'

'It is permitted,' said the abbot.

Seithenyn held forth the goblet to the monk, who swallowed the contents with much devotion. He then withdrew, and closed the door.

'I bid you most heartily welcome,' said Seithenyn to Taliesin. 'Drink off this, and I will tell you more. You are admitted to this special sitting at my special instance. I told the abbot I knew you well. Now I will tell you what I know. You have told King Arthur that King Melvas has possession of Queen Gwenyvar, and, in consequence, King Arthur is coming here, to sack and raze the castle and abbey, and cut every throat in the isle of Avallon. I have just brought the abbot this pleasant intelligence, and, as I knew it would take him down a cup or two, I have also

brought what I call my little jug, to have the benefit of his judgment on a piece of rare wine which I have broached this morning: there is no better in Caer Lleon. And now we are holding council on the emergency. But I must say you abuse your bardic privilege, to enjoy people's hospitality, worm out their secrets, and carry the news to the enemy. It was partly to give you this candid opinion, that I have prevailed on the abbot to admit you to this special sitting. Therefore drink. GWIN O EUR: Wine from gold.'

'King Arthur is not a Saxon, at any rate,' sighed the abbot, winding up his fainting spirits with a draught. 'Think not, young stranger, that I am transgressing the laws of temperance: my blood runs so cold when I think of the bloodthirsty Saxons, that I take a little wine medicinally, in the hope of warming it; but it is a slow and tedious remedy.'

'Take a little more,' said Seithenyn. 'That is the true quantity. Wine is my medicine; and my quantity is a little more. A little more.'

'King Arthur,' said Taliesin, 'is not a Saxon; but he does not brook injuries lightly. It were better for your abbey that he came not here in arms. The aiders and abettors of Melvas, even though they be spiritual, may not carry off the matter without some share of his punishment, which is infallible.'

'That is just what I have been thinking,' said Seithenyn.

'God knows,' said the abbot, 'we are not abettors of Melvas, though we need his temporal power to protect us from the Saxons.'

'How can it be otherwise,' said Taliesin, 'than

that these Saxon despoilers should be insolent and triumphant, while the princes of Britain are distracted with domestic broils: and for what?'

'Ay,' said Seithenyn, 'that is the point. For what? For a woman, or some such rubbish.'

'Rubbish, most verily,' said the abbot. 'Women are the flesh which we renounce with the devil.'

'Holy father,' said Taliesin, 'have you not spiritual influence with Melvas, to persuade him to surrender the queen without bloodshed, and, renewing his allegiance to Arthur, assist him in his most sacred war against the Saxon invaders?'

'A righteous work,' said the abbot; 'but Melvas is headstrong and difficult.'

'Screw yourself up with another goblet,' said Seithenyn; 'you will find the difficulty smooth itself off wonderfully. Wine from gold has a sort of double light, that illuminates a dark path miraculously.'

The abbot sighed deeply, but adopted Seithenyn's method of throwing light on the subject.

'The anger of King Arthur,' said Taliesin, 'is certain, and its consequences infallible. The anger of King Melvas is doubtful, and its consequences to you cannot be formidable.'

'That is nearly true,' said the abbot, beginning to look resolute, as the rosebud at his nose-tip deepened into damask.

'A little more,' said Seithenyn, 'and it will become quite true.'

By degrees the proposition ripened into absolute truth. The abbot suddenly inflated his cheeks, started on his legs, and stalked bolt upright out of the apartment, and forthwith out of the abbey,

followed by Seithenyn, tossing his goblet in the air, and catching it in his hand, as he went.

The round-faced brother made his appearance almost immediately. 'The abbot,' he said, 'commends you to the hospitality of the brotherhood. They will presently assemble to supper. In the meanwhile, as I am thirsty, and content with whatever falls in my way, I will take a simple and single draught of what happens to be here.'

His draught was a model of simplicity and singleness; for, having uplifted the ponderous vase, he held it to his lips, till he had drained it of the very copious remnant which the abrupt departure of the abbot had caused Seithenyn to leave in it.

Taliesin proceeded to enjoy the hospitality of the brethren, who set before him a very comfortable hot supper, at which he quickly perceived, that, however dexterous King Elphin might be at catching fish, the monks of Avallon were very far his masters in the three great arts of cooking it, serving it up, and washing it down; but he had not time to profit by their skill and experience in these matters, for he received a pressing invitation to the castle of Melvas, which he obeyed immediately.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RIGHT OF MIGHT

The three triumphs of the bards of the isle of Britain: the triumph of learning over ignorance; the triumph of reason over error; and the triumph of peace over violence.
TRIADS OF BARDISM.

'FRIEND Seithenyn,' said the abbot, when, having passed the castle gates, and solicited an audience, he was proceeding to the presence of Melvas, 'this task, to which I have accinged myself, is arduous, and in some degree awful; being, in truth, no less than to persuade a king to surrender a possession, which he has inclination to keep for ever, and power to keep, at any rate, for an indefinite time.'

'Not so very indefinite,' said Seithenyn; 'for with the first song of the cuckoo (whom I mention on this occasion as a party concerned,) King Arthur will batter his castle about his ears, and, in all likelihood, the abbey about yours.'

The abbot sighed heavily.

'If your heart fail you,' said Seithenyn, 'another cup of wine will set all to rights.'

'Nay, nay, friend Seithenyn,' said the abbot, 'that which I have already taken has just brought me to the point at which the heart is inspirited, and the wit sharpened, without any infraction of the wisdom and gravity which become my character, and best suit my present business.'

Seithenyn, however, took an opportunity of making signs to some cupbearers, and, when they entered the apartment of Melvas, they were followed by vessels of wine and goblets of gold.

King Melvas was a man of middle age, with a somewhat round, large, regular-featured face, and an habitual smile of extreme self-satisfaction, which he could occasionally convert into a look of terrific ferocity, the more fearful for being rare. His manners were, for the most part, pleasant. He did much mischief, not for mischief's sake, nor yet for the sake of excitement, but for the sake of something tangible. He had a total and most complacent indifference to every thing but his own will and pleasure. He took what he wanted wherever he could find it, by the most direct process, and without any false pretence. He would have disdained the trick which the chroniclers ascribe to Hengist, of begging as much land as a bull's hide would surround, and then shaving it into threads, which surrounded a goodly space. If he wanted a piece of land, he encamped upon it, saying, 'This is mine.' If the former possessor could eject him, so; it was not his: if not, so; it remained his. Cattle, wine, furniture, another man's wife, whatever he took a fancy to, he pounced upon and appropriated. He was intolerant of resistance; and, as the shortest way of getting rid of it, and not from any blood-thirstiness of disposition, or, as the phrenologists have it, development of the organ of destructiveness, he always cut through the resisting body, longitudinally, horizontally, or diagonally, as he found most convenient. He was the arch-marauder of West Britain. The abbey of Avallon shared largely in the spoil, and they made up together a most harmonious church and state. He had some respect for King Arthur; wished him success against the Saxons; knew the superiority of his

power to his own; but he had heard that Queen Gwenyvar was the most beautiful woman in Britain; was, therefore, satisfied of his own title to her, and, as she was hunting in the forest, while King Arthur was absent from Caer Lleon, he seized her, and carried her off.

'Be seated, holy father,' said Melvas; 'and you, also, Seithenyn, unless the abbot wishes you away.'

But the abbot's heart misgave him, and he assented readily to Seithenyn's stay.

MELVAS.

Now, holy father, to your important matter of private conference.

SEITHENYN.

He is tongue-tied, and a cup too low.

THE ABBOT.

Set the goblet before me, and I will sip in moderation.

MELVAS.

Sip, or not sip, tell me your business.

THE ABBOT.

My business, of a truth, touches the lady your prisoner, King Arthur's queen.

MELVAS.

She is my queen, while I have her, and no prisoner. Drink, man, and be not afraid. Speak your mind: I will listen, and weigh your words.

THE ABBOT.

This queen—

SEITHENYN.

Obey the king: first drink, then speak.

THE ABBOT.

I drink to please the king.

MELVAS.

Proceed.

THE ABBOT.

This queen, Gwenyvar, is as beautiful as Helen, who caused the fatal war that expelled our forefathers from Troy: and I fear she will be a second Helen, and expel their posterity from Britain.[1] The infidel Saxons, to whom the cowardly and perfidious Vortigern gave footing in Britain, have prospered even more by the disunion of her princes than either by his villany, or their own valour. And now there is no human hope against them but in the arms of Arthur. And how shall his arms prosper against the common enemy, if he be forced to turn them on the children of his own land for the recovery of his own wife?

MELVAS.

What do you mean by his own? That which he has, is his own: but that which I have, is mine. I have the wife in question, and some of the land. Therefore they are mine.

[1] According to the British Chronicles, Brutus, the great grandson of Æneas, having killed his father, Silvius, to fulfil a prophecy, went to Greece, where he found the posterity of Helenus, the son of Priam; collected all of the Trojan race within the limits of Greece; and, after some adventures by land and sea, settled them in Britain, which was before uninhabited, 'except by a few giants.'

THE ABBOT.

Not so. The land is yours under fealty to him.

MELVAS.

As much fealty as I please, or he can force me, to give him.

THE ABBOT.

His wife, at least, is most lawfully his.

MELVAS.

The winner makes the law, and his law is always against the loser. I am so far the winner; and, by my own law, she is lawfully mine.

THE ABBOT.

There is a law above all human law, by which she is his.

MELVAS.

From that it is for you to absolve me; and I dispense my bounty according to your indulgence.

THE ABBOT.

There are limits we must not pass.

MELVAS.

You set up your landmark, and I set up mine. They are both moveable.

THE ABBOT.

The Church has not been niggardly in its indulgences to King Melvas.

MELVAS.

Nor King Melvas in his gifts to the Church.

THE ABBOT.

But, setting aside this consideration, I would treat it as a question of policy.

SEITHENYN.

Now you talk sense. Right without might is the lees of an old barrel, without a drop of the original liquor.

THE ABBOT.

I would appeal to you, King Melvas, by your love to your common country, by your love of the name of Britain, by your hatred of the infidel Saxons, by your respect for the character of Arthur; will you let your passion for a woman, even though she be a second Helen, frustrate, or even impede, the great cause, of driving these spoilers from a land in which they have no right even to breathe?

MELVAS.

They have a right to do all they do, and to have all they have. If we can drive them out, they will then have no right here. Have not you and I a right to this good wine, which seems to trip very merrily over your ghostly palate? I got it by seizing a good ship, and throwing the crew overboard, just to remove them out of the way, because they were troublesome. They disputed my right, but I taught them better. I taught them a great moral lesson, though they had not much time to profit by it. If they had had the might to throw me overboard, I should not have troubled myself about their right, any more, or, at any rate, any longer, than they did about mine.

SEITHENYN.

The wine was lawful spoil of war.

THE ABBOT.

But if King Arthur brings his might to bear upon yours, I fear neither you nor I shall have a right to this wine, nor to any thing else that is here.

SEITHENYN.

Then make the most of it while you have it.

THE ABBOT.

Now, while you have some months of security before you, you may gain great glory by surrendering the lady; and, if you be so disposed, you may no doubt claim, from the gratitude of King Arthur, the fairest princess of his court to wife, and an ample dower withal.

MELVAS.

That offers something tangible.

SEITHENYN.

Another ray from the golden goblet will set it in a most luminous view.

THE ABBOT.

Though I should advise the not making it a condition, but asking it, as a matter of friendship, after the first victory that you have helped him to gain over the Saxons.

MELVAS.

The worst of those Saxons is, that they offer nothing tangible, except hard knocks. They bring nothing with them. They come to take; and

lately they have not taken much. But I will muse on your advice ; and, as it seems, I may get more by following than rejecting it, I shall very probably take it, provided that you now attend me to the banquet in the hall.

SEITHENYN.

Now you talk of the hall and the banquet, I will just intimate that the finest of all youths, and the best of all bards, is a guest in the neighbouring abbey.

MELVAS.

If so, I have a clear right to him, as a guest for myself.

The abbot was not disposed to gainsay King Melvas's right. Taliesin was invited accordingly, and seated at the left hand of the king, the abbot being on the right. Taliesin summoned all the energies of his genius to turn the passions of Melvas into the channels of Anti-Saxonism, and succeeded so perfectly, that the king and his whole retinue of magnanimous heroes were inflamed with intense ardour to join the standard of Arthur ; and Melvas vowed most solemnly to Taliesin, that another sun should not set, before Queen Gwenyvar should be under the most honourable guidance on her return to Caer Lleon.

CHAPTER XV

THE CIRCLE OF THE BARDS

The three dignities of poetry: the union of the true and the wonderful; the union of the beautiful and the wise; and the union of art and nature.

TRIADS OF POETRY.

AMONGST the Christmas amusements of Caer Lleon, a grand Bardic Congress was held in the Roman theatre, when the principal bards of Britain contended for the pre-eminence in the art of poetry, and in its appropriate moral and mystical knowledge. The meeting was held by daylight. King Arthur presided, being himself an irregular bard, and admitted, on this public occasion, to all the efficient honours of a Bard of Presidency.

To preside in the Bardic Congress was long a peculiar privilege of the kings of Britain. It was exercised in the seventh century by King Cadwallader. King Arthur was assisted by twelve umpires, chosen by the bards, and confirmed by the king.

The Court, of course, occupied the stations of honour, and every other part of the theatre was crowded with a candid and liberal audience.

The bards sate in a circle on that part of the theatre corresponding with the portion which we call the stage.

Silence was proclaimed by the herald; and, after a grand symphony, which was led off in fine style by the king's harper, Geraint, Prince Cei came forward, and made a brief oration, to the effect that any of the profane, who should be irregular and tumultuous, would be forcibly

removed from the theatre, to be dealt with at the discretion of the officer of the guard. Silence was then a second time proclaimed by the herald.

Each bard, as he stood forward, was subjected to a number of interrogatories, metrical and mystical, which need not be here reported. Many bards sang many songs. Amongst them, Prince Llywarch sang

GORWYNION Y GAUAV

THE BRILLIANCIES OF WINTER

Last of flowers, in tufts around
Shines the gorse's golden bloom:
Milkwhite lichens clothe the ground
'Mid the flowerless heath and broom:
Bright are holly-berries, seen
Red, through leaves of glossy green.

Brightly, as on rocks they leap,
Shine the sea-waves, white with spray;
Brightly, in the dingles deep,
Gleams the river's foaming way;
Brightly through the distance show
Mountain-summits clothed in snow.

Brightly, where the torrents bound,
Shines the frozen colonnade,
Which the black rocks, dripping round,
And the flying spray have made:
Bright the icedrops on the ash
Leaning o'er the cataract's dash.

Bright the hearth, where feast and song
Crown the warrior's hour of peace,
While the snow-storm drives along,
Bidding war's worse tempest cease;
Bright the hearthflame, flashing clear
On the up-hung shield and spear.

Bright the torchlight of the hall
When the wintry night-winds blow;
Brightest when its splendors fall
On the mead-cup's sparkling flow:
While the maiden's smile of light
Makes the brightness trebly bright.

Close the portals; pile the hearth;
Strike the harp; the feast pursue:
Brim the horns: fire, music, mirth,
Mead and love, are winter's due.
Spring to purple conflict calls
Swords that shine on winter's walls.

Llywarch's song was applauded, as presenting a series of images with which all present were familiar, and which were all of them agreeable.

Merlin sang some verses of the poem which is called

AVALLENAU MYRDDIN

MERLIN'S APPLE-TREES

Fair the gift to Merlin given,
Apple-trees seven score and seven;
Equal all in age and size;
On a green hill-slope, that lies
Basking in the southern sun,
Where bright waters murmuring run.

Just beneath the pure stream flows;
High above the forest grows;
Not again on earth is found
Such a slope of orchard ground:
Song of birds, and hum of bees,
Ever haunt the apple-trees.

Lovely green their leaves in spring;
Lovely bright their blossoming:
Sweet the shelter and the shade
By their summer foliage made:
Sweet the fruit their ripe boughs hold,
Fruit delicious, tinged with gold.

Gloyad, nymph with tresses bright,
Teeth of pearl, and eyes of light,
Guards these gifts of Ceidio's son,
Gwendol, the lamented one,
Him, whose keen-edged sword no more
Flashes 'mid the battle's roar.

War has raged on vale and hill:
That fair grove was peaceful still.
There have chiefs and princes sought
Solitude and tranquil thought:
There have kings, from courts and throngs,
Turned to Merlin's wild-wood songs.

Now from echoing woods I hear
Hostile axes sounding near:
On the sunny slope reclined,
Feverish grief disturbs my mind,
Lest the wasting edge consume
My fair spot of fruit and bloom.

Lovely trees, that long alone
In the sylvan vale have grown,
Bare, your sacred plot around,
Grows the once wood-waving ground:
Fervent valour guards ye still;
Yet my soul presages ill.

Well I know, when years have flown,
Briars shall grow where ye have grown:
Them in turn shall power uproot;
Then again shall flowers and fruit
Flourish in the sunny breeze,
On my new-born apple-trees.

This song was heard with much pleasure, especially by those of the audience who could see, in the imagery of the apple-trees, a mystical type of the doctrines and fortunes of Druidism, to which Merlin was suspected of being secretly attached, even under the very nose of St. David.

Aneurin sang a portion of his poem on the

battle of Cattraeth; in which he shadowed out the glory of Vortimer, the weakness of Vortigern, the fascinations of Rowena, the treachery of Hengist, and the vengeance of Emrys.

THE MASSACRE OF THE BRITONS

Sad was the day for Britain's land,
A day of ruin to the free,
When Gorthyn [1] stretched a friendly hand
To the dark dwellers of the sea.[2]

But not in pride the Saxon trod,
Nor force nor fraud oppressed the brave,
Ere the grey stone and flowery sod
Closed o'er the blessed hero's grave.[3]

The twice-raised monarch [4] drank the charm,
The love-draught of the ocean-maid: [5]
Vain then the Briton's heart and arm,
Keen spear, strong shield, and burnished blade.

'Come to the feast of wine and mead,'
Spake the dark dweller of the sea: [6]
'There shall the hours in mirth proceed;
There neither sword nor shield shall be.'

Hard by the sacred temple's site,
Soon as the shades of evening fall,
Resounds with song and glows with light
The ocean-dweller's rude-built hall.

The sacred ground, where chiefs of yore
The everlasting fire adored,
The solemn pledge of safety bore,
And breathed not of the treacherous sword.

[1] Gwrtheyrn: Vortigern. [2] Hengist and Horsa.
[3] Gwrthevyr: Vortimer: who drove the Saxons out of Britain.
[4] Vortigern: who was, on the death of his son Vortimer, restored to the throne from which he had been deposed.
[5] Ronwen: Rowena. [6] Hengist.

The amber wreath his temples bound;
His vest concealed the murderous blade;
As man to man, the board around,
The guileful chief his host arrayed.

None but the noblest of the land,
The flower of Britain's chiefs, were there:
Unarmed, amid the Saxon band,
They sate, the fatal feast to share.

Three hundred chiefs, three score and three,
Went, where the festal torches burned
Before the dweller of the sea:
They went; and three alone returned.

'Till dawn the pale sweet mead they quaffed:
The ocean-chief unclosed his vest;
His hand was on his dagger's haft,
And daggers glared at every breast.

But him, at Eidiol's [1] breast who aimed,
The mighty Briton's arm laid low:
His eyes with righteous anger flamed;
He wrenched the dagger from the foe;

And through the throng he cleft his way,
And raised without his battle cry;
And hundreds hurried to the fray,
From towns, and vales, and mountains high.

But Britain's best blood dyed the floor
Within the treacherous Saxon's hall;
Of all, the golden chain who wore,
Two only answered Eidiol's call.

Then clashed the sword; then pierced the lance;
Then by the axe the shield was riven;
Then did the steed on Cattraeth prance,
And deep in blood his hoofs were driven.

Even as the flame consumes the wood,
So Eidiol rushed along the field;
As sinks the snow-bank in the flood,
So did the ocean-rovers yield.

[1] Eidiol or Emrys: Emrys Wledig: Ambrosius.

The spoilers from the fane he drove;
He hurried to the rock-built tower,
Where the base king,[1] in mirth and love,
Sate with his Saxon paramour.[1]

The storm of arms was on the gate,
The blaze of torches in the hall,
So swift, that ere they feared their fate,
The flames had scaled their chamber wall.

They died: for them no Briton grieves;
No planted flower above them waves;
No hand removes the withered leaves
That strew their solitary graves.

And time the avenging day brought round
That saw the sea-chief vainly sue:
To make his false host bite the ground
Was all the hope our warrior knew.

And evermore the strife he led,
Disdaining peace, with princely might,
Till, on a spear, the spoiler's[2] head
Was reared on Caer-y-Cynan's height.

The song of Aneurin touched deeply on the sympathies of the audience, and was followed by a grand martial symphony, in the midst of which Taliesin appeared in the Circle of Bards. King Arthur welcomed him with great joy, and sweet smiles were showered upon him from all the beauties of the court.

Taliesin answered the metrical and mystical questions to the astonishment of the most proficient; and, advancing, in his turn, to the front of the circle, he sang a portion of a poem which

[1] Vortigern and Rowena
[2] Hengist.

is now called Hanes Taliesin, The History of Taliesin; but which shall be here entitled

THE CAULDRON OF CERIDWEN

The sage Ceridwen was the wife
Of Tegid Voël, of Pemble Mere:
Two children blest their wedded life,
Morvran and Creirwy, fair and dear:
Morvran, a son of peerless worth,
And Creirwy, loveliest nymph of earth:
But one more son Ceridwen bare,
As foul as they before were fair.

She strove to make Avagddu wise;
She knew he never could be fair:
And, studying magic mysteries,
She gathered plants of virtue rare:
She placed the gifted plants to steep
Within the magic cauldron deep,
Where they a year and day must boil,
'Till three drops crown the matron's toil.

Nine damsels raised the mystic flame;
Gwion the Little near it stood:
The while for simples roved the dame
Through tangled dell and pathless wood.
And, when the year and day had past,
The dame within the cauldron cast
The consummating chaplet wild,
While Gwion held the hideous child.

But from the cauldron rose a smoke
That filled with darkness all the air:
When through its folds the torchlight broke,
Nor Gwion, nor the boy, was there.
The fire was dead, the cauldron cold,
And in it lay, in sleep uprolled,
Fair as the morning-star, a child,
That woke, and stretched its arms, and smiled.

What chanced her labours to destroy,
She never knew; and sought in vain
If 'twere her own misshapen boy,
Or little Gwion, born again:

And, vext with doubt, the babe she rolled
In cloth of purple and of gold,
And in a coracle consigned
Its fortunes to the sea and wind.

The summer night was still and bright,
The summer moon was large and clear.
The frail bark, on the springtide's height,
Was floated into Elphin's weir.
The baby in his arms he raised:
His lovely spouse stood by, and gazed,
And, blessing it with gentle vow,
Cried 'TALIESIN!' 'Radiant brow!'

And I am he: and well I know
Ceridwen's power protects me still;
And hence o'er hill and vale I go,
And sing, unharmed, whate'er I will.
She has for me Time's veil withdrawn:
The images of things long gone,
The shadows of the coming days,
Are present to my visioned gaze.

And I have heard the words of power,
By Ceirion's solitary lake,
That bid, at midnight's thrilling hour,
Eryri's hundred echoes wake.
I to Diganwy's towers have sped,
And now Caer Lleon's halls I tread,
Demanding justice, now, as then,
From Maelgon, most unjust of men.

The audience shouted with delight at the song of Taliesin, and King Arthur, as President of the Bardic Congress, conferred on him, at once, the highest honours of the sitting.

Where Taliesin picked up the story which he told of himself, why he told it, and what he meant by it, are questions not easily answered. Certain it is, that he told this story to his contemporaries, and that none of them contradicted it. It may, therefore, be presumed that they believed it; as

any one who pleases is most heartily welcome to do now.

Besides the single songs, there were songs in dialogue, approaching very nearly to the character of dramatic poetry; and pennillion, or unconnected stanzas, sung in series by different singers, the stanzas being complete in themselves, simple as Greek epigrams, and presenting in succession moral precepts, pictures of natural scenery, images of war or of festival, the lamentations of absence or captivity, and the complaints or triumphs of love. This pennillion-singing long survived among the Welsh peasantry almost every other vestige of bardic customs, and may still be heard among them on the few occasions on which rack-renting, tax-collecting, common-enclosing, methodist-preaching, and similar developments of the light of the age, have left them either the means or inclination of making merry.

CHAPTER XVI

THE JUDGMENTS OF ARTHUR

Three things to which success cannot fail where they shall justly be: discretion, exertion, and hope.
TRIADS OF WISDOM.

KING ARTHUR had not long returned to his hall, when Queen Gwenyvar arrived, escorted by the Abbot of Avallon and Seithenyn ap Seithyn Saidi, who had brought his golden goblet, to gain a new harvest of glory from the cellars of Caer Lleon.

Seithenyn assured King Arthur, in the name of King Melvas, and on the word of a king, backed by that of his butler, which, truth being in wine,

is good warranty even for a king, that the queen returned as pure as on the day King Melvas had carried her off.

'None here will doubt that;' said Gwenvach, the wife of Modred. Gwenyvar was not pleased with the compliment, and, almost before she had saluted King Arthur, she turned suddenly round, and slapped Gwenvach on the face, with a force that brought more crimson into one cheek than blushing had ever done into both. This slap is recorded in the Bardic Triads as one of the Three Fatal Slaps of the Island of Britain. A terrible effect is ascribed to this small cause; for it is said to have been the basis of that enmity between Arthur and Modred, which terminated in the battle of Camlan, wherein all the flower of Britain perished on both sides: a catastrophe more calamitous than any that ever before or since happened in Christendom, not even excepting that of the battle of Roncesvalles; for, in the battle of Camlan, the Britons exhausted their own strength, and could no longer resist the progress of the Saxon supremacy. This, however, was a later result, and comes not within the scope of the present veridicous narrative.

Gwenvach having flounced out of the hall, and the tumult occasioned by this little incident having subsided, Queen Gwenyvar took her ancient seat by the side of King Arthur, who proceeded to inquire into the circumstances of her restoration. The Abbot of Avallon began an oration, in praise of his own eloquence, and its miraculous effects on King Melvas; but he was interrupted by Seithenyn, who said, 'The abbot's eloquence was good and well timed; but the chief merit belongs

to this young bard, who prompted him with good counsel, and to me, who inspirited him with good liquor. If he had not opened his mouth pretty widely when I handed him this golden goblet, exclaiming GWIN O EUR, he would never have had the heart to open it to any other good purpose. But the most deserving person is this very promising youth, in whom I can see no fault, but that he has not the same keen perception as my friend the abbot has of the excellent relish of wine from gold. To be sure, he plied me very hard with strong drink in the hall of Dinas Vawr, and thereby wormed out of me the secret of Queen Gwenyvar's captivity; and, afterwards, he pursued us to Avallon, where he persuaded me and the abbot, and the abbot persuaded King Melvas, that it would be better for all parties to restore the queen peaceably: and then he clenched the matter with the very best song I ever heard in my life. And, as my young friend has a boon to ask, I freely give him all my share of the merit, and the abbot's into the bargain.'

'Allow me, friend GWIN O EUR,' said the abbot, 'to dispose of my own share of merit in my own way. But, such as it is, I freely give it to this youth, in whom, as you say, I can see no fault, but that his head is brimfull of Pagan knowledge.'

Arthur paid great honour to Taliesin, and placed him on his left hand at the banquet. He then said to him, 'I judge, from your song of this morning, that the boon you require from me concerns Maelgon Gwyneth. What is his transgression, and what is the justice you require?'

Taliesin narrated the adventures of Elphin in such a manner as gave Arthur an insight into his

affection for Melanghel; and he supplicated King Arthur to command and enforce the liberation of Elphin from the Stone Tower of Diganwy.

Before King Arthur could signify his assent, Maelgon Gwyneth stalked into the hall, followed by a splendid retinue. He had been alarmed by the absence of Rhûn, had sought him in vain on the banks of the Mawddach, had endeavoured to get at the secret by pouncing upon Angharad and Melanghel, and had been baffled in his project by the vigilance of Teithrin ap Tathral. He had, therefore, as a last resort, followed Taliesin to Caer Lleon, conceiving that he might have had some share in the mysterious disappearance of Rhûn.

Arthur informed him that he was in possession of all the circumstances, and that Rhûn, who was in safe custody, would be liberated on the restoration of Elphin.

Maelgon boiled with rage and shame, but had no alternative but submission to the will of Arthur.

King Arthur commanded that all the parties should be brought before him. Caradoc was charged with the execution of this order, and, having received the necessary communications and powers from Maelgon and Taliesin, he went first to Diganwy, where he liberated Elphin, and then proceeded to give effect to Teithrin's declaration, that 'no hand but Elphin's should raise the stone of Rhûn's captivity.' Rhûn, while his pleasant adventure had all the gloss of novelty upon it, and his old renown as a gay deceiver was consequently in such dim eclipse, was very unwilling to present himself before the ladies of Caer Lleon; but Caradoc was peremptory, and carried off the

crest-fallen prince, together with his bard of all work, who was always willing to go to any court, with any character, or none.

Accordingly, after a moderate lapse of time, Caradoc reappeared in the hall of Arthur, with the liberated captives, accompanied by Angharad and Melanghel, and Teithrin ap Tathral.

King Arthur welcomed the new comers with a magnificent festival, at which all the beauties of his court were present, and, addressing himself to Elphin, said, 'We are all debtors to this young bard: my queen and myself for her restoration to me; you for your liberation from the Stone Tower of Diganwy. Now, if there be, amongst all these ladies, one whom he would choose for his bride, and in whose eyes he may find favor, I will give the bride a dowry worthy of the noblest princess in Britain.'

Taliesin, thus encouraged, took the hand of Melanghel, who did not attempt to withdraw it, but turned to her father a blushing face, in which he read her satisfaction and her wishes. Elphin immediately said, 'I have nothing to give him but my daughter; but her I most cordially give him.'

Taliesin said, 'I owe to Elphin more than I can ever repay: life, honour, and happiness.'

Arthur said, 'You have not paid him ill; but you owe nothing to Maelgon and Rhûn, who are your debtors for a lesson of justice, which I hope they will profit by during the rest of their lives. Therefore Maelgon shall defray the charge of your wedding, which shall be the most splendid that has been seen in Caer Lleon.'

Maelgon looked exceedingly grim, and wished himself well back in Diganwy.

There was a very pathetic meeting of recognition between Seithenyn and his daughter; at the end of which he requested her husband's interest to obtain for him the vacant post of second butler to King Arthur. He obtained this honourable office; and was so zealous in the fulfilment of its duties, that, unless on actual service with a detachment of liquor, he never was a minute absent from the Temple of Diana.

At a subsequent Bardic Congress, Taliesin was unanimously elected Pen Beirdd, or Chief of the Bards of Britain. The kingdom of Caredigion flourished under the protection of Arthur, and, in the ripeness of time, passed into the hands of Avaon, the son of Taliesin and Melanghel.

THE END.

CROTCHET CASTLE

Le monde est plein de fous, et qui n'en veut pas voir,
Doit se tenir tout seul, et casser son miroir.

Should once the world resolve to abolish
All that's ridiculous and foolish,
It would have nothing left to do,
To apply in jest or earnest to.—BUTLER

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CROTCHET CASTLE

CHAPTER I

THE VILLA

Captain Jamy. I wad full fain hear some question 'tween you tway.—*Henry V.*

In one of those beautiful vallies, through which the Thames (not yet polluted by the tide, the scouring of cities, or even the minor defilement of the sandy streams of Surrey,) rolls a clear flood through flowery meadows, under the shade of old beech woods, and the smooth mossy greensward of the chalk hills (which pour into it their tributary rivulets, as pure and pellucid as the fountain of Bandusium, or the wells of Scamander, by which the wives and daughters of the Trojans washed their splendid garments in the days of peace, before the coming of the Greeks); in one of those beautiful vallies, on a bold round-surfaced lawn, spotted with juniper, that opened itself in the bosom of an old wood, which rose with a steep, but not precipitous ascent, from the river to the summit of the hill, stood the castellated villa of a retired citizen. Ebenezer Mac Crotchet, Esquire, was the London-born offspring of a worthy native of the 'north countrie,' who had walked up to London on a commercial adventure, with all his surplus capital, not very neatly tied up in a not very clean handkerchief, suspended over his shoulder from the end of a hooked stick, extracted from the first hedge on his pilgrimage; and who, after having worked

himself a step or two up the ladder of life, had won the virgin heart of the only daughter of a highly respectable merchant of Duke's Place, with whom he inherited the honest fruits of a long series of ingenuous dealings.

Mr. Mac Crotchet had derived from his mother the instinct, and from his father the rational principle, of enriching himself at the expense of the rest of mankind, by all the recognised modes of accumulation on the windy side of the law. After passing many years in the alley, watching the turn of the market, and playing many games almost as desperate as that of the soldier of Lucullus,[1] the fear of losing what he had so righteously gained predominated over the sacred thirst of paper-money; his caution got the better of his instinct, or rather transferred it from the department of acquisition to that of conservation. His friend, Mr. Ramsbottom, the zodiacal mythologist, told him that he had done well to withdraw from the region of Uranus or Brahma, the maker, to that of Saturn or Veeshnu, the preserver, before he fell under the eye of Jupiter or Seva, the destroyer, who might have struck him down at a blow.

It is said, that a Scotchman returning home, after some years' residence in England, being asked what he thought of the English, answered: 'They hanna ower muckle sense, but they are an unco braw people to live amang;' which would be a very good story, if it were not rendered apocryphal, by the incredible circumstance of the Scotchman going back.

[1] Luculli miles, &c. HOR. *Ep.* II. 2. 26. 'In Anna's wars, a soldier poor and bold,' &c.—POPE's *Imitation.*

Mr. Mac Crotchet's experience had given him a just title to make, in his own person, the last-quoted observation, but he would have known better than to go back, even if himself, and not his father, had been the first comer of his line from the north. He had married an English Christian, and, having none of the Scotch accent, was ungracious enough to be ashamed of his blood. He was desirous to obliterate alike the Hebrew and Caledonian vestiges in his name, and signed himself E. M. Crotchet, which by degrees induced the majority of his neighbours to think that his name was Edward Matthew. The more effectually to sink the Mac, he christened his villa Crotchet Castle, and determined to hand down to posterity the honours of Crotchet of Crotchet. He found it essential to his dignity to furnish himself with a coat of arms, which, after the proper ceremonies (payment being the principal), he obtained, videlicet: Crest, a crotchet rampant, in A sharp: Arms, three empty bladders, turgescent, to show how opinions are formed; three bags of gold, pendent, to show why they are maintained; three naked swords, tranchant, to show how they are administered; and three barbers' blocks, gaspant, to show how they are swallowed.

Mr. Crotchet was left a widower, with two children; and, after the death of his wife, so strong was his sense of the blessed comfort she had been to him, that he determined never to give any other woman an opportunity of obliterating the happy recollection.

He was not without a plausible pretence for styling his villa a castle, for, in its immediate vicinity, and within his own enclosed domain, were

the manifest traces, on the brow of the hill, of a Roman station, or *castellum*, which was still called the castle by the country people. The primitive mounds and trenches, merely overgrown with greensward, with a few patches of juniper and box on the vallum, and a solitary ancient beech surmounting the place of the prætorium, presented nearly the same depths, heights, slopes, and forms, which the Roman soldiers had originally given them. From this *castellum* Mr. Crotchet christened his villa. With his rustic neighbours he was of course immediately and necessarily a squire: Squire Crotchet of the castle; and he seemed to himself to settle down as naturally into an English country gentleman, as if his parentage had been as innocent of both Scotland and Jerusalem, as his education was of Rome and Athens.

But as, though you expel nature with a pitchfork, she will yet always come back;[1] he could not become, like a true-born English squire, part and parcel of the barley-giving earth; he could not find in game-bagging, poacher-shooting, trespasser-pounding, footpath-stopping, common-enclosing, rack-renting, and all the other liberal pursuits and pastimes which make a country gentleman an ornament to the world, and a blessing to the poor; he could not find in these valuable and amiable occupations, and in a corresponding range of ideas, nearly commensurate with that of the great King Nebuchadnezzar, when he was turned out to grass; he could not find in this great variety of useful action, and vast field of comprehensive thought, modes of filling up his time that accorded with his

[1] Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.—Hor. *Ep.* I. 10. 24.

Caledonian instinct. The inborn love of disputation, which the excitements and engagements of a life of business had smothered, burst forth through the calmer surface of a rural life. He grew as fain as Captain Jamy, 'to hear some airgument betwixt ony tway;' and being very hospitable in his establishment, and liberal in his invitations, a numerous detachment from the advanced guard of the 'march of intellect' often marched down to Crotchet Castle.

When the fashionable season filled London with exhibitors of all descriptions, lecturers and else, Mr. Crotchet was in his glory; for, in addition to the perennial literati of the metropolis, he had the advantage of the visits of a number of hardy annuals, chiefly from the north, who, as the interval of their metropolitan flowering allowed, occasionally accompanied their London brethren in excursions to Crotchet Castle.

Amongst other things, he took very naturally to political economy, read all the books on the subject which were put forth by his own countrymen, attended all lectures thereon, and boxed the technology of the sublime science as expertly as an able seaman boxes the compass.

With this agreeable mania he had the satisfaction of biting his son, the hope of his name and race, who had borne off from Oxford the highest academical honours; and who, treading in his father's footsteps to honour and fortune, had, by means of a portion of the old gentleman's surplus capital, made himself a junior partner in the eminent loan-jobbing firm of Catchflat and Company. Here, in the days of paper prosperity, he applied his science-illumined genius to the blowing

of bubbles, the bursting of which sent many a poor devil to the jail, the workhouse, or the bottom of the river, but left young Crotchet rolling in riches.

These riches he had been on the point of doubling, by a marriage with the daughter of Mr. Touchandgo, the great banker, when, one foggy morning, Mr. Touchandgo and the contents of his till were suddenly reported absent; and as the fortune which the young gentleman had intended to marry was not forthcoming, this tender affair of the heart was nipped in the bud.

Miss Touchandgo did not meet the shock of separation quite so complacently as the young gentleman; for he lost only the lady, whereas she lost a fortune as well as a lover. Some jewels, which had glittered on her beautiful person as brilliantly as the bubble of her father's wealth had done in the eyes of his gudgeons, furnished her with a small portion of paper currency; and this, added to the contents of a fairy purse of gold, which she found in her shoe on the eventful morning when Mr. Touchandgo melted into thin air, enabled her to retreat into North Wales, where she took up her lodging in a farm-house in Merionethshire, and boarded very comfortably for a trifling payment, and the additional consideration of teaching English, French, and music to the little Ap-Llymry's. In the course of this occupation, she acquired sufficient knowledge of Welsh to converse with the country people.

She climbed the mountains, and descended the dingles, with a foot which daily habit made by degrees almost as steady as a native's. She became the nymph of the scene; and if she sometimes pined in thought for her faithless Strephon,

her melancholy wasany thing but green and yellow; it was as genuine white and red as occupation, mountain air, thyme-fed mutton, thick cream, and fat bacon, could make it: to say nothing of an occasional glass of double X, which Ap-Llymry,[1] who yielded to no man west of the Wrekin in brewage, never failed to press upon her at dinner and supper. He was also earnest, and sometimes successful, in the recommendation of his mead, and most pertinacious on winter nights in enforcing a trial of the virtues of his elder wine. The young lady's personal appearance, consequently, formed a very advantageous contrast to that of her quondam lover, whose physiognomy the intense anxieties of his bubble-blowing days, notwithstanding their triumphant result, had left blighted, sallowed, and crow's-footed, to a degree not far below that of the fallen spirit who, in the expressive language of German romance, is described as 'scathed by the ineradicable traces of the thunderbolts of Heaven;' so that, contemplating their relative geological positions, the poor deserted damsel was flourishing on slate, while her rich and false young knight was pining on chalk.

Squire Crotchet had also one daughter, whom he had christened Lemma, and who, as likely to be endowed with a very ample fortune, was, of course, an object very tempting to many young soldiers of fortune, who were marching with the march of mind, in a good condition for taking castles, as far as not having a groat is a qualification for such exploits.[2] She was also a glittering bait to divers

[1] Llymry. Anglicé flummery.

[2] 'Let him take castles who has ne'er a groat.'—Pope, *ubi suprà*.

young squires expectant (whose fathers were too well acquainted with the occult signification of mortgage), and even to one or two sprigs of nobility, who thought that the lining of a civic purse would superinduce a very passable factitious nap upon a threadbare title. The young lady had received an expensive and complicated education; complete in all the elements of superficial display. She was thus eminently qualified to be the companion of any masculine luminary who had kept due pace with the 'astounding progress' of intelligence. It must be confessed, that a man who has not kept due pace with it is not very easily found; this march being one of that 'astounding' character in which it seems impossible that the rear can be behind the van. The young lady was also tolerably good-looking: north of Tweed, or in Palestine, she would probably have been a beauty; but for the vallies of the Thames, she was perhaps a little too much to the taste of Solomon, and had a nose which rather too prominently suggested the idea of the tower of Lebanon, which looked towards Damascus.

In a village in the vicinity of the castle was the vicarage of the Reverend Doctor Folliott, a gentleman endowed with a tolerable stock of learning, an interminable swallow, and an indefatigable pair of lungs. His pre-eminence in the latter faculty gave occasion to some etymologists to ring changes on his name, and to decide that it was derived from Follis Optimus, softened through an Italian medium into Folle Ottimo, contracted poetically into Folleotto, and elided Anglicé into Folliott, signifying a first-rate pair of bellows. He claimed to be descended lineally

from the illustrious Gilbert Folliott, the eminent theologian, who was a bishop of London in the twelfth century, whose studies were interrupted in the dead of night by the devil; when a couple of epigrams passed between them; and the devil, of course, proved the smaller wit of the two.[1]

This reverend gentleman, being both learned and jolly, became by degrees an indispensable ornament to the new squire's table. Mr. Crotchet himself was eminently jolly, though by no means eminently learned. In the latter respect he took after the great majority of the sons of his father's land; had a smattering of many things, and a knowledge of none; but possessed the true northern art of making the most of his intellectual harlequin's jacket, by keeping the best patches always bright and prominent.

[1] The devil began: (he had caught the bishop musing on politics.)

Oh Gilberte Folliott!
Dum revolvis tot et tot,
Deus tuus est Astarot.

Oh Gilbert Folliott!
While thus you muse and plot,
Your god is Astarot.

The bishop answered:

Tace, dæmon: qui est deus
Sabbaot, est ille meus.

Peace, fiend; the power I own
Is Sabbaoth's Lord alone.

It must be confessed, the devil was easily posed in the twelfth century. He was a sturdier disputant in the sixteenth.

Did not the devil appear to Martin
Luther in Germany for certain?

when 'the heroic student,' as Mr. Coleridge calls him, was forced to proceed to '*voies de fait*.' The curious may see at this day, on the wall of Luther's study, the traces of the ink-bottle which he threw at the devil's head.

CHAPTER II

THE MARCH OF MIND

Quoth Ralpho: nothing but the abuse
Of human learning you produce.—BUTLER.

'GOD bless my soul, sir!' exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, bursting, one fine May morning, into the breakfast-room at Crotchet Castle, 'I am out of all patience with this march of mind. Here has my house been nearly burned down, by my cook taking it into her head to study hydrostatics, in a sixpenny-tract, published by the Steam Intellect Society, and written by a learned friend who is for doing all the world's business as well as his own, and is equally well qualified to handle every branch of human knowledge. I have a great abomination of this learned friend; as author, lawyer, and politician, he is *triformis*, like Hecate: and in every one of his three forms he is *bifrons*, like Janus; the true Mr. Facing-both-ways of Vanity Fair. My cook must read his rubbish in bed; and as might naturally be expected, she dropped suddenly fast asleep, overturned the candle, and set the curtains in a blaze. Luckily, the footman went into the room at the moment, in time to tear down the curtains and throw them into the chimney, and a pitcher of water on her nightcap extinguished her wick: she is a greasy subject, and would have burned like a short mould.'

The reverend gentleman exhaled his grievance without looking to the right or to the left; at length, turning on his pivot, he perceived that the room was full of company, consisting of young Crotchet and some visitors whom he had brought

from London. The Reverend Doctor Folliott was introduced to Mr. Mac Quedy,[1] the economist; Mr. Skionar,[2] the transcendental poet; Mr. Firedamp, the meteorologist; and Lord Bossnowl, son of the Earl of Foolincourt, and member for the borough of Rogueingrain.

The divine took his seat at the breakfast-table, and began to compose his spirits by the gentle sedative of a large cup of tea, the demulcent of a well-buttered muffin, and the tonic of a small lobster.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You are a man of taste, Mr. Crotchet. A man of taste is seen at once in the array of his breakfast-table. It is the foot of Hercules, the far-shining face of the great work, according to Pindar's doctrine: *ἀρχομένου ἔργου, πρόσωπον χρὴ θέμεν τηλαυγές*.[3] The breakfast is the *πρόσωπον* of the great work of the day. Chocolate, coffee, tea, cream, eggs, ham, tongue, cold fowl,—all these are good, and bespeak good knowledge in him who sets them forth: but the touchstone is fish: anchovy is the first step, prawns and shrimps the second; and I laud him who reaches even to these: potted char and lampreys are the third, and a fine stretch of progression; but lobster is, indeed, matter for a May morning, and demands a rare combination of knowledge and virtue in him who sets it forth.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, and what say you to a fine fresh trout,

[1] Quasi Mac Q. E. D., son of a demonstration.

[2] ΣΚΙᾶς ΟΝΑΠ. *Umbræ somnium.*

[3] Far-shining be the face
Of a great work begun.—PIND. Ol. vi.

hot and dry, in a napkin? or a herring out of the water into the frying pan, on the shore of Loch Fyne?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I say every nation has some eximious virtue; and your country is pre-eminent in the glory of fish for breakfast. We have much to learn from you in that line at any rate.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

And in many others, sir, I believe. Morals and metaphysics, politics and political economy, the way to make the most of all the modifications of smoke; steam, gas, and paper currency; you have all these to learn from us; in short, all the arts and sciences. We are the modern Athenians.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I, for one, sir, am content to learn nothing from you but the art and science of fish for breakfast. Be content, sir, to rival the Bœotians, whose redeeming virtue was in fish, touching which point you may consult Aristophanes and his scholiast, in the passage of Lysistrata, ἀλλ' ἄφελε τὰς ἐγχέλεις,[1] and leave the name of Athenians to those who have a sense of the beautiful, and a perception of metrical quantity.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Then, sir, I presume you set no value on the right principles of rent, profit, wages, and currency?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My principles, sir, in these things are, to take

[1] Calonice wishes destruction to all Bœotians. Lysistrata answers, '*Except the eels.*' *Lysistrata*, 36.

as much as I can get, and to pay no more than I can help. These are every man's principles, whether they be the right principles or no. There, sir, is political economy in a nutshell.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

The principles, sir, which regulate production and consumption, are independent of the will of any individual as to giving or taking, and do not lie in a nutshell by any means.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I will thank you for a leg of that capon.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

But, sir, by the by, how came your footman to be going into your cook's room? It was very providential to be sure, but——

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, as good came of it, I shut my eyes, and asked no questions. I suppose he was going to study hydrostatics, and he found himself under the necessity of practising hydraulics.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Sir, you seem to make very light of science.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Yes, sir, such science as the learned friend deals in: every thing for every body, science for all, schools for all, rhetoric for all, law for all, physic for all, words for all, and sense for none. I say, sir, law for lawyers, and cookery for cooks: and I wish the learned friend, for all his life, a cook that will pass her time in studying his works; then every

dinner he sits down to at home, he will sit on the stool of repentance.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

Now really that would be too severe: my cook should read nothing but Ude.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir! let Ude and the learned friend singe fowls together; let both avaunt from my kitchen. Θύρας δ' ἐπίθεσθε βεβήλοις.[1] Ude says an elegant supper may be given with sandwiches. *Horresco referens.* An elegant supper! *Dî meliora piis.* No Ude for me. Conviviality went out with punch and suppers. I cherish their memory. I sup when I can, but not upon sandwiches. To offer me a sandwich, when I am looking for a supper, is to add insult to injury. Let the learned friend, and the modern Athenians, sup upon sandwiches.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, sir; the modern Athenians know better than that. A literary supper in sweet Edinbroo' would cure you of the prejudice you seem to cherish against us.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, well; there is cogency in a good supper; a good supper, in these degenerate days, bespeaks a good man; but much more is wanted to make up an Athenian. Athenians, indeed! where is your theatre? who among you has written a comedy? where is your attic salt? which of you can tell who was Jupiter's great grandfather? or what metres will successively remain, if you take off

[1] 'Shut the doors against the profane.' ORPHICA, *passim.*

the three first syllables, one by one, from a pure antispastic acatalectic tetrameter? Now, sir, there are three questions for you; theatrical, mythological, and metrical; to every one of which an Athenian would give an answer that would lay me prostrate in my own nothingness.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, as to your metre and your mythology, they may e'en wait a wee. For your comedy, there is the Gentle Shepherd of the divine Allan Ramsay.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

The Gentle Shepherd! It is just as much a comedy as the book of Job.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, if none of us have written a comedy, I cannot see that it is any such great matter, any more than I can conjecture what business a man can have at this time of day with Jupiter's great grandfather.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

The great business is, sir, that you call yourselves Athenians, while you know nothing that the Athenians thought worth knowing, and dare not show your noses before the civilised world in the practice of any one art in which they were excellent. Modern Athens, sir! the assumption is a personal affront to every man who has a Sophocles in his library. I will thank you for an anchovy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Metaphysics, sir; metaphysics. Logic and moral philosophy. There we are at home. The

Athenians only sought the way, and we have found it; and to all this we have added political economy, the science of sciences.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

A hyperbarbarous technology, that no Athenian ear could have borne. Premises assumed without evidence, or in spite of it; and conclusions drawn from them so logically, that they must necessarily be erroneous.

MR. SKIONAR.

I cannot agree with you, Mr. Mac Quedy, that you have found the true road of metaphysics, which the Athenians only sought. The Germans have found it, sir: the sublime Kant, and his disciples.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I have read the sublime Kant, sir, with an anxious desire to understand him; and I confess I have not succeeded.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He wants the two great requisites of head and tail.

MR. SKIONAR.

Transcendentalism is the philosophy of intuition, the development of universal convictions; truths which are inherent in the organisation of mind, which cannot be obliterated, though they may be obscured, by superstitious prejudice on the one hand, and by the Aristotelian logic on the other.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, I have no notion of logic obscuring a question.

MR. SKIONAR.

There is only one true logic, which is the transcendental; and this can prove only the one true philosophy, which is also the transcendental. The logic of your modern Athens can prove every thing equally; and that is, in my opinion, tantamount to proving nothing at all.

MR. CROTCHET.

The sentimental against the rational, the intuitive against the inductive, the ornamental against the useful, the intense against the tranquil, the romantic against the classical; these are great and interesting controversies, which I should like, before I die, to see satisfactorily settled.

MR. FIREDAMP.

There is another great question, greater than all these, seeing that it is necessary to be alive in order to settle any question; and this is the question of water against human woe[1]. Wherever there is water, there is *malaria*, and wherever there is *malaria*, there are the elements of death. The great object of a wise man should be to live on a gravelly hill, without so much as a duck-pond within ten miles of him, eschewing cisterns and water-butts, and taking care that there be no gravel-pits for lodging the rain. The sun sucks up infection from water, wherever it exists on the face of the earth.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, you have for you the authority of the ancient mystagogue, who said: *Ἐστιν ὕδωρ ψυχῇ θάνατος*.[2] For my part I care not a rush (or any other

[1] Human life 1831.

[2] Literally, which is sufficient for the present purpose, 'Water is death to the soul.' ORPHICA: *Fr.* XIX.

aquatic and inesculent vegetable) who or what sucks up either the water or the infection. I think the proximity of wine a matter of much more importance than the longinquity of water. You are here within a quarter of a mile of the Thames; but in the cellar of my friend, Mr. Crotchet, there is the talismanic antidote of a thousand dozen of old wine; a beautiful spectacle, I assure you, and a model of arrangement.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Sir, I feel the malignant influence of the river in every part of my system. Nothing but my great friendship for Mr. Crotchet would have brought me so nearly within the jaws of the lion.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

After dinner, sir, after dinner, I will meet you on this question. I shall then be armed for the strife. You may fight like Hercules against Achelous, but I shall flourish the Bacchic thyrsus, which changed rivers into wine: as Nonnus sweetly sings, Οἴνῳ κυματόεντι μέλας κελάρυζεν Ὑδάσπης.[1]

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

I hope, Mr. Firedamp, you will let your friendship carry you a little closer into the jaws of the lion. I am fitting up a flotilla of pleasure boats, with spacious cabins, and a good cellar, to carry a choice philosophical party up the Thames and Severn, into the Ellesmere canal, where we shall be among the mountains of North Wales; which we may climb or not, as we think proper; but we

[1] Hydaspes gurgled, dark with billowy wine. *Dionysiaca*, XXV. 280.

will, at any rate, keep our floating hotel well provisioned and we will try to settle all the questions over which a shadow of doubt yet hangs in the world of philosophy.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Out of my great friendship for you, I will certainly go; but I do not expect to survive the experiment.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quæ vehat Argo Delectos Heroas.[1] I will be of the party, though I must hire an officiating curate, and deprive poor dear Mrs. Folliott, for several weeks, of the pleasure of combing my wig.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

I hope, if I am to be of the party, our ship is not to be the ship of fools: He! He!

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

If you are one of the party, sir, it most assuredly will not: Ha! Ha!

LORD BOSSNOWL.

Pray sir, what do you mean by Ha! Ha!?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Precisely, sir, what you mean by He! He!

MR. MAC QUEDY.

You need not dispute about terms; they are two modes of expressing merriment, with or with-

[1] 'Another Tiphys on the waves shall float,
And chosen heroes freight his glorious boat.'
VIRG. *Ecl.* IV

out reason; reason being in no way essential to mirth. No man should ask another why he laughs, or at what, seeing that he does not always know, and that, if he does, he is not a responsible agent. Laughter is an involuntary action of certain muscles, developed in the human species by the progress of civilisation. The savage never laughs.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir, he has nothing to laugh at. Give him Modern Athens, the 'learned friend,' and the Steam Intellect Society. They will develope his muscles.

CHAPTER III

THE ROMAN CAMP

He loved her more then seven yere,
Yet was he of her love never the nere;
He was not ryche of golde and fe,
A gentyll man forsoth was he.
The Squyr of Low Degre.

THE Reverend Doctor Folliott having promised to return to dinner, walked back to his vicarage, meditating whether he should pass the morning in writing his next sermon, or in angling for trout, and had nearly decided in favour of the latter proposition, repeating to himself, with great unction, the lines of Chaucer:—

And as for me, though that I can but lite,
On bokis for to read I me delite,
And to 'hem yeve I faithe and full credence,
And in mine herte have 'hem in reverence,
So hertily, that there is gamé none,
That fro my bokis makith me to gone,

But it be seldome, on the holie daie:
Save certainly whan that the month of Maie
Is comin, and I here the foulis sing,
And that the flouris ginnin for to spring,
Farewell my boke and my devocion:

when his attention was attracted by a young gentleman who was sitting on a camp stool with a portfolio on his knee, taking a sketch of the Roman camp, which, as has been already said, was within the enclosed domain of Mr. Crotchet. The young stranger, who had climbed over the fence, espying the portly divine, rose up, and hoped that he was not trespassing. 'By no means, sir,' said the divine; 'all the arts and sciences are welcome here: music, painting, and poetry; hydrostatics, and political economy; meteorology, transcendentalism, and fish for breakfast.'

THE STRANGER.

A pleasant association, sir, and a liberal and discriminating hospitality. This is an old British camp, I believe, sir?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Roman, sir; Roman: undeniably Roman. The vallum is past controversy. It was not a camp, sir, a *castrum*, but a *castellum*, a little camp, or watch-station, to which was attached, on the peak of the adjacent hill, a beacon for transmitting alarms. You will find such here and there, all along the range of chalk hills, which traverses the country from north-east to south-west, and along the base of which runs the ancient Ikenild road, whereof you may descry a portion in that long strait white line.

THE STRANGER.

I beg your pardon, sir: do I understand this place to be your property?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

It is not mine, sir: the more is the pity; yet is it so far well, that the owner is my good friend, and a highly respectable gentleman.

THE STRANGER.

Good and respectable, sir, I take it, mean rich?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That is their meaning, sir.

THE STRANGER.

I understand the owner to be a Mr. Crotchet. He has a handsome daughter, I am told.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He has, sir. Her eyes are like the fishpools of Heshbon, by the gate of Bethrabbim; and she is to have a handsome fortune, to which divers disinterested gentlemen are paying their addresses. Perhaps you design to be one of them.

THE STRANGER.

No, sir; I beg pardon if my questions seem impertinent; I have no such design. There is a son, too, I believe, sir, a great and successful blower of bubbles.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

A hero, sir, in his line. Never did angler in September hook more gudgeons.

THE STRANGER.

To say the truth, two very amiable young people, with whom I have some little acquaintance, Lord Bossnowl, and his sister, Lady Clarinda, are reported to be on the point of concluding a double marriage with Miss Crotchet and her brother, by way of putting a new varnish on old nobility. Lord Foolincourt, their father, is terribly poor for a lord who owns a borough.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, the Crotchets have plenty of money, and the old gentleman's weak point is a hankering after high blood. I saw your acquaintance Lord Bossnowl this morning; but I did not see his sister. She may be there, nevertheless, and doing fashionable justice to this fine May morning, by lying in bed till noon.

THE STRANGER.

Young Mr. Crotchet, sir, has been, like his father, the architect of his own fortune, has he not? An illustrious example of the reward of honesty and industry?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

As to honesty, sir, he made his fortune in the city of London; and if that commodity be of any value there, you will find it in the price current. I believe it is below par, like the shares of young Crotchet's fifty companies. But his progress has not been exactly like his father's: it has been more rapid, and he started with more advantages. He began with a fine capital from his father. The old gentleman divided his fortune into three not exactly equal portions: one for himself, one for his

daughter, and one for his son, which he handed over to him, saying, ' Take it once for all, and make the most of it ; if you lose it where I won it, not another stiver do you get from me during my life.' But, sir, young Crotchet doubled, and trebled, and quadrupled it, and is, as you say, a striking example of the reward of industry ; not that I think his labour has been so great as his luck.

THE STRANGER.

But, sir, is all this solid ? is there no danger of reaction ? no day of reckoning, to cut down in an hour prosperity that has grown up like a mushroom ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Nay, sir, I know not. I do not pry into these matters. I am, for my own part, very well satisfied with the young gentleman. Let those who are not so look to themselves. It is quite enough for me that he came down last night from London, and that he had the good sense to bring with him a basket of lobsters. Sir, I wish you a good morning.

The stranger, having returned the reverend gentleman's good morning, resumed his sketch, and was intently employed on it when Mr. Crotchet made his appearance, with Mr. Mac Quedy and Mr. Skionar, whom he was escorting round his grounds, according to his custom with new visitors ; the principal pleasure of possessing an extensive domain being that of showing it to other people. Mr. Mac Quedy, according also to the laudable custom of his countrymen, had been appraising every thing that fell under his observation ; but, on arriving at the Roman camp, of which the

value was purely imaginary, he contented himself with exclaiming, 'Eh! this is just a curiosity, and very pleasant to sit in on a summer day.'

MR. SKIONAR.

And call up the days of old, when the Roman eagle spread its wings in the place of that beechen foliage. It gives a fine idea of duration, to think that that fine old tree must have sprung from the earth ages after this camp was formed.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

How old, think you, may the tree be?

MR. CROTCHET.

I have records which show it to be three hundred years old.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

That is a great age for a beech in good condition. But you see the camp is some fifteen hundred years, or so, older; and three times six being eighteen, I think you get a clearer idea of duration out of the simple arithmetic than out of your eagle and foliage.

MR. SKIONAR.

That is a very unpoetical, if not unphilosophical, mode of viewing antiquities. Your philosophy is too literal for our imperfect vision. We cannot look directly into the nature of things; we can only catch glimpses of the mighty shadow in the camera obscura of transcendental intelligence. These six and eighteen are only words to which we give conventional meanings. We can reason, but we cannot feel, by help of them. The tree and the eagle, contemplated in the ideality of space and

time, become subjective realities, that rise up as landmarks in the mystery of the past.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, if you understand that, I wish you joy. But I must be excused for holding that my proposition, three times six are eighteen, is more intelligible than yours. A worthy friend of mine, who is a sort of amateur in philosophy, criticism, politics, and a wee bit of many things more, says, 'Men never begin to study antiquities till they are saturated with civilisation.' [1]

MR. SKIONAR.

What is civilisation?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

It is just respect for property: a state in which no man takes wrongfully what belongs to another, is a perfectly civilised state.

MR. SKIONAR.

Your friend's antiquaries must have lived in El Dorado, to have had an opportunity of being saturated with such a state.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

It is a question of degree. There is more respect for property here than in Angola.

MR. SKIONAR.

That depends on the light in which things are viewed.

Mr. Crotchet was rubbing his hands, in hopes of

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, somewhere.

a fine discussion, when they came round to the side of the camp where the picturesque gentleman was sketching. The stranger was rising up, when Mr. Crotchet begged him not to disturb himself, and presently walked away with his two guests.

Shortly after, Miss Crotchet and Lady Clarinda, who had breakfasted by themselves, made their appearance at the same spot, hanging each on an arm of Lord Bossnowl, who very much preferred their company to that of the philosophers, though he would have preferred the company of the latter, or any company, to his own. He thought it very singular that so agreeable a person as he held himself to be to others, should be so exceedingly tiresome to himself: he did not attempt to investigate the cause of this phenomenon, but was contented with acting on his knowledge of the fact, and giving himself as little of his own private society as possible.

The stranger rose as they approached, and was immediately recognised by the Bossnowls as an old acquaintance, and saluted with the exclamation of 'Captain Fitzchrome!' The interchange of salutation between Lady Clarinda and the Captain was accompanied with an amiable confusion on both sides, in which the observant eyes of Miss Crotchet seemed to read the recollection of an affair of the heart.

Lord Bossnowl was either unconscious of any such affair, or indifferent to its existence. He introduced the Captain very cordially to Miss Crotchet, and the young lady invited him, as the friend of their guests, to partake of her father's hospitality; an offer which was readily accepted.

The Captain took his portfolio under his right

arm, his camp stool in his right hand, offered his left arm to Lady Clarinda, and followed at a reasonable distance behind Miss Crotchet and Lord Bossnowl, contriving, in the most natural manner possible, to drop more and more into the rear.

LADY CLARINDA.

I am glad to see you can make yourself so happy with drawing old trees and mounds of grass.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Happy, Lady Clarinda! oh, no! How can I be happy when I see the idol of my heart about to be sacrificed on the shrine of Mammon?

LADY CLARINDA.

Do you know, though Mammon has a sort of ill name, I really think he is a very popular character; there must be at the bottom something amiable about him. He is certainly one of those pleasant creatures whom every body abuses, but without whom no evening party is endurable. I dare say, love in a cottage is very pleasant; but then it positively must be a cottage ornée: but would not the same love be a great deal safer in a castle, even if Mammon furnished the fortification?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Oh, Lady Clarinda! there is a heartlessness in that language that chills me to the soul.

LADY CLARINDA.

Heartlessness! No: my heart is on my lips. I speak just what I think. You used to like it, and say it was as delightful as it was rare.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

True, but you did not then talk as you do now, of love in a castle.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, but only consider: a dun is a horridly vulgar creature; it is a creature I cannot endure the thought of: and a cottage lets him in so easily. Now a castle keeps him at bay. You are a half-pay officer, and are at leisure to command the garrison: but where is the castle? and who is to furnish the commissariat?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Is it come to this, that you make a jest of my poverty? Yet is my poverty only comparative. Many decent families are maintained on smaller means.

LADY CLARINDA.

Decent families: aye, decent is the distinction from respectable. Respectable means rich, and decent means poor. I should die if I heard my family called decent. And then your decent family always lives in a snug little place: I hate a little place: I like large rooms and large looking-glasses, and large parties, and a fine large butler, with a tinge of smooth red in his face; an outward and visible sign that the family he serves is respectable; if not noble, highly respectable.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I cannot believe that you say all this in earnest. No man is less disposed than I am to deny the importance of the substantial comforts of life. I once flattered myself that in our estimate of these things we were nearly of a mind.

LADY CLARINDA.

Do you know, I think an opera-box a very substantial comfort, and a carriage. You will tell me that many decent people walk arm in arm through the snow, and sit in clogs and bonnets in the pit at the English theatre. No doubt it is very pleasant to those who are used to it; but it is not to my taste.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You always delighted in trying to provoke me; but I cannot believe that you have not a heart.

LADY CLARINDA.

You do not like to believe that I have a heart, you mean. You wish to think I have lost it, and you know to whom; and when I tell you that it is still safe in my own keeping, and that I do not mean to give it away, the unreasonable creature grows angry.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Angry! far from it: I am perfectly cool.

LADY CLARINDA.

Why you are pursing your brows, biting your lips, and lifting up your foot as if you would stamp it into the earth. I must say anger becomes you; you would make a charming Hotspur. Your every-day-dining-out face is rather insipid: but I assure you my heart is in danger when you are in the heroics. It is so rare, too, in these days of smooth manners, to see any thing like natural expression in a man's face. There is one set form for every man's face in female society; a sort of serious comedy, walking gentleman's face; but the moment the creature falls in love, he begins to

give himself airs, and plays off all the varieties of his physiognomy, from the Master Slender to the Petruchio; and then he is actually very amusing.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Well, Lady Clarinda, I will not be angry, amusing as it may be to you: I listen more in sorrow than in anger. I half believe you in earnest, and mourn as over a fallen angel.

LADY CLARINDA.

What, because I have made up my mind not to give away my heart when I can sell it? I will introduce you to my new acquaintance, Mr. Mac Quedy: he will talk to you by the hour about exchangeable value, and show you that no rational being will part with any thing, except to the highest bidder.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Now, I am sure you are not in earnest. You cannot adopt such sentiments in their naked deformity.

LADY CLARINDA.

Naked deformity: why Mr. Mac Quedy will prove to you that they are the cream of the most refined philosophy. You live a very pleasant life as a bachelor, roving about the country with your portfolio under your arm. I am not fit to be a poor man's wife. I cannot take any kind of trouble, or do any one thing that is of any use. Many decent families roast a bit of mutton on a string; but if I displease my father I shall not have as much as will buy the string, to say nothing of the meat; and the bare idea of such cookery gives me the horrors.

By this time they were near the castle, and met Miss Crotchet and her companion, who had turned back to meet them. Captain Fitzchrome was shortly after heartily welcomed by Mr. Crotchet, and the party separated to dress for dinner, the captain being by no means in an enviable state of mind, and full of misgivings as to the extent of belief that he was bound to accord to the words of the lady of his heart.

CHAPTER IV

THE PARTY

En quoi cognoissez-vous la folie anticque ? En quoi cognoissez-vous la sagesse présente ?—RABELAIS.

'IF I were sketching a bandit who had just shot his last pursuer, having outrun all the rest, that is the very face I would give him,' soliloquised the captain, as he studied the features of his rival in the drawing-room, during the miserable half-hour before dinner, when dulness reigns predominant over the expectant company, especially when they are waiting for some one last comer, whom they all heartily curse in their hearts, and whom, nevertheless, or indeed therefore-the-more, they welcome as a sinner, more heartily than all the just persons who had been punctual to their engagement. Some new visitors had arrived in the morning, and, as the company dropped in one by one, the captain anxiously watched the unclosing door for the form of his beloved; but she was the last to make her appearance, and on her entry gave him a malicious glance, which he construed into a telegraphic communication that she had stayed

away to torment him. Young Crotchet escorted her with marked attention to the upper end of the drawing-room, where a great portion of the company was congregated around Miss Crotchet. These being the only ladies in the company, it was evident that old Mr. Crotchet would give his arm to Lady Clarinda, an arrangement with which the captain could not interfere. He therefore took his station near the door, studying his rival from a distance, and determined to take advantage of his present position, to secure the seat next to his charmer. He was meditating on the best mode of operation for securing this important post with due regard to *bienséance*, when he was twitched by the button by Mr. Mac Quedy, who said to him: 'Lady Clarinda tells me, sir, that you are anxious to talk with me on the subject of exchangeable value, from which I infer that you have studied political economy; and as a great deal depends on the definition of value, I shall be glad to set you right on that point.'—'I am much obliged to you, sir,' said the captain, and was about to express his utter disqualification for the proposed instruction, when Mr. Skionar walked up, and said: 'Lady Clarinda informs me that you wish to talk over with me the question of subjective reality. I am delighted to fall in with a gentleman who duly appreciates the transcendental philosophy.'—'Lady Clarinda is too good,' said the captain; and was about to protest that he had never heard the word transcendental before, when the butler announced dinner. Mr. Crotchet led the way with Lady Clarinda: Lord Bossnowl followed with Miss Crochet: the economist and transcendentalist pinned in the captain, and held

him, one by each arm, as he impatiently descended the stairs in the rear of several others of the company, whom they had forced him to let pass; but the moment he entered the dining-room he broke loose from them, and at the expense of a little *brusquerie*, secured his position.

'Well, captain,' said Lady Clarinda, 'I perceive you can still manœuvre.'

'What could possess you,' said the captain, 'to send two unendurable and inconceivable bores, to intercept me with rubbish about which I neither know nor care any more than the man in the moon?'

'Perhaps,' said Lady Clarinda, 'I saw your design, and wished to put your generalship to the test. But do not contradict any thing I have said about you, and see if the learned will find you out.'

'There is fine music, as Rabelais observes, in the *cliquetis d'assiettes*, a refreshing shade in the *ombre de salle à manger*, and an elegant fragrance in the *fumée de rôti*,' said a voice at the captain's elbow. The captain turning round, recognised his clerical friend of the morning, who knew him again immediately, and said he was extremely glad to meet him there; more especially as Lady Clarinda had assured him that he was an enthusiastic lover of Greek poetry.

'Lady Clarinda,' said the captain, 'is a very pleasant young lady.'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

So she is, sir: and I understand she has all the wit of the family to herself, whatever that *totum* may be. But a glass of wine after soup is, as the French say, the *verre de santé*. The current of

opinion sets in favour of Hock: but I am for Madeira; I do not fancy Hock till I have laid a substratum of Madeira. Will you join me?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

With pleasure.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Here is a very fine salmon before me: and May is the very *point nommé* to have salmon in perfection. There is a fine turbot close by, and there is much to be said in his behalf; but salmon in May is the king of fish.

MR. CROTCHET.

That salmon before you, doctor, was caught in the Thames this morning.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Παπαπαῖ! Rarity of rarities! A Thames salmon caught this morning. Now, Mr. Mac Quedy, even in fish your Modern Athens must yield. *Cedite Graii.*

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh! sir, on its own ground, your Thames salmon has two virtues over all others: first, that it is fresh; and, second, that it is rare; for I understand you do not take half a dozen in a year.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

In some years, sir, not one. Mud, filth, gas dregs, lock-wiers, and the march of mind, developed in the form of poaching, have ruined the fishery. But when we do catch a salmon, happy the man to whom he falls.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I confess, sir, this is excellent; but I cannot see why it should be better than a Tweed salmon at Kelso.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I will take a glass of Hock with you.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

With all my heart, sir. There are several varieties of the salmon genus: but the common salmon, the *salmo salar*, is only one species, one and the same every where, just like the human mind. Locality and education make all the difference.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Education! Well, sir, I have no doubt schools for all are just as fit for the species *salmo salar* as for the genus *homo*. But you must allow, that the specimen before us has finished his education in a manner that does honour to his college. However, I doubt that the *salmo salar* is only one species, that is to say, precisely alike in all localities. I hold that every river has its own breed, with essential differences; in flavour especially. And as for the human mind, I deny that it is the same in all men. I hold that there is every variety of natural capacity from the idiot to Newton and Shakspeare; the mass of mankind, midway between these extremes, being blockheads of different degrees; education leaving them pretty nearly as it found them, with this single difference, that it gives a fixed direction to their stupidity, a sort of incurable wry neck to the thing they call their understanding. So one nose

points always east, and another always west, and each is ready to swear that it points due north.

MR. CROTCHET.

If that be the point of truth, very few intellectual noses point due north.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Only those that point to the Modern Athens.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Where all native noses point southward.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh, sir, northward for wisdom, and southward for profit.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Champagne, doctor ?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Most willingly. But you will permit my drinking it while it sparkles. I hold it a heresy to let it deaden in my hand, while the glass of my *compotator* is being filled on the opposite side of the table. By the bye, captain, you remember a passage in Athenæus, where he cites Menander on the subject of fish-sauce : ὀψάριον ἐπὶ ἰχθύος. (*The captain was aghast for an answer that would satisfy both his neighbours, when he was relieved by the divine continuing.*) The science of fish-sauce, Mr. Mac Quedy, is by no means brought to perfection ; a fine field of discovery still lies open in that line.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, sir, beyond lobster-sauce, I take it, ye cannot go.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

In their line, I grant you, oyster and lobster sauce are the pillars of Hercules. But I speak of the cruet sauces, where the quintessence of the sapid is condensed in a phial. I can taste in my mind's palate a combination, which, if I could give it reality, I would christen with the name of my college, and hand it down to posterity as a seat of learning indeed.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, I wish you success, but I cannot let slip the question we started just now. I say, cutting off idiots, who have no minds at all, all minds are by nature alike. Education (which begins from their birth) makes them what they are.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir, it makes their tendencies, not their power. Cæsar would have been the first wrestler on the village common. Education might have made him a Nadir Shah ; it might also have made him a Washington ; it could not have made him a merry-andrew, for our newspapers to extol as a model of eloquence.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Now, sir, I think education would have made him just any thing, and fit for any station, from the throne to the stocks ; saint or sinner, aristocrat or democrat, judge, counsel, or prisoner at the bar.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I will thank you for a slice of lamb, with lemon and pepper. Before I proceed with this discus-

sion. —Vin de Grave, Mr. Skionar. —I must interpose one remark. There is a set of persons in your city, Mr. Mac Quedy, who concoct every three or four months a thing which they call a review: a sort of sugar-plum manufacturers to the Whig aristocracy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I cannot tell, sir, exactly, what you mean by that; but I hope you will speak of those gentlemen with respect, seeing that I am one of them.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I must drown my inadvertence in a glass of Sauterne with you. There is a set of gentlemen in your city——

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Not in our city, exactly; neither are they a set. There is an editor, who forages for articles in all quarters, from John O'Groat's house to the Land's End. It is not a board, or a society: it is a mere intellectual bazaar, where A., B., and C. bring their wares to market.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, these gentlemen among them, the present company excepted, have practised as much dishonesty as, in any other department than literature, would have brought the practitioner under the cognisance of the police. In politics, they have run with the hare and hunted with the hound. In criticism they have, knowingly and unblushingly, given false characters, both for good and for evil: sticking at no art of misrepresenta-

tion, to clear out of the field of literature all who stood in the way of the interests of their own clique. They have never allowed their own profound ignorance of any thing (Greek, for instance) to throw even an air of hesitation into their oracular decision on the matter. They set an example of profligate contempt for truth, of which the success was in proportion to the effrontery; and when their prosperity had filled the market with competitors, they cried out against their own reflected sin, as if they had never committed it, or were entitled to a monopoly of it. The latter, I rather think, was what they wanted.

MR. CROTCHET.

Hermitage, doctor?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Nothing better, sir. The father who first chose the solitude of that vineyard, knew well how to cultivate his spirit in retirement. Now, Mr. Mac Quedy, Achilles was distinguished above all the Greeks for his inflexible love of truth: could education have made Achilles one of your reviewers?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No doubt of it, even if your character of them were true to the letter.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

And I say, sir—chicken and asparagus—Titan had made him of better clay.[1] I hold with Pindar: 'All that is most excellent is so by nature.' Τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον ἅπαν.[2] Education can give pur-

[1] Juv. xiv. 35.

[2] Ol. ix. 152.

poses, but not powers; and whatever purposes had been given him, he would have gone straight forward to them; straight forward. Mr. Mac Quedy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No, sir, education makes the man, powers, purposes, and all.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

There is the point, sir, on which we join issue.

Several others of the company now chimed in with their opinions, which gave the divine an opportunity to degustate one or two side dishes, and to take a glass of wine with each of the young ladies.

CHAPTER V

CHARACTERS

Ay imputé a honte plus que médiocre être vu spectateur ocieux de tant vaillans, disertz, et chevalereux personnaiges.—RABELAIS.

LADY CLARINDA (*to the Captain*).

I DECLARE the creature has been listening to all this rigmarole, instead of attending to me. Do you ever expect forgiveness? But now that they are all talking together, and you cannot make out a word they say, nor they hear a word that we say, I will describe the company to you. First, there is the old gentleman on my left hand, at the head of the table, who is now leaning the other way to talk to my brother. He is a good-tempered, half-informed person, very unreasonably fond of

reasoning, and of reasoning people; people that talk nonsense logically: he is fond of disputation himself, when there are only one or two, but seldom does more than listen in a large company of *illuminés*. He made a great fortune in the city, and has the comfort of a good conscience. He is very hospitable, and is generous in dinners; though nothing would induce him to give sixpence to the poor, because he holds that all misfortune is from imprudence, that none but the rich ought to marry, and that all ought to thrive by honest industry, as he did. He is ambitious of founding a family, and of allying himself with nobility; and is thus as willing as other grown children, to throw away thousands for a gewgaw, though he would not part with a penny for charity. Next to him is my brother, whom you know as well as I do. He has finished his education with credit, and as he never ventures to oppose me in any thing, I have no doubt he is very sensible. He has good manners, is a model of dress, and is reckoned ornamental in all societies. Next to him is Miss Crotchet, my sister-in-law that is to be. You see she is rather pretty, and very genteel. She is tolerably accomplished, has her table always covered with new novels, thinks Mr. Mac Quedy an oracle, and is extremely desirous to be called 'my lady.' Next to her is Mr. Firedamp, a very absurd person, who thinks that water is the evil principle. Next to him is Mr. Eavesdrop, a man who, by dint of a certain something like smartness, has got into good society. He is a sort of bookseller's tool, and coins all his acquaintance in reminiscences and sketches of character. I am very shy of him, for fear he should print me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

If he print you in your own likeness, which is that of an angel, you need not fear him. If he print you in any other, I will cut his throat. But proceed—

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to him is Mr. Henbane, the toxicologist, I think he calls himself. He has passed half his life in studying poisons and antidotes. The first thing he did on his arrival here, was to kill the cat; and while Miss Crotchet was crying over her, he brought her to life again. I am more shy of him than the other.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

They are two very dangerous fellows, and I shall take care to keep them both at a respectful distance. Let us hope that Eavesdrop will sketch off Henbane, and that Henbane will poison him for his trouble.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, next to him sits Mr. Mac Quedy, the Modern Athenian, who lays down the law about every thing, and therefore may be taken to understand every thing. He turns all the affairs of this world into questions of buying and selling. He is the Spirit of the Frozen Ocean to every thing like romance and sentiment. He condenses their volume of steam into a drop of cold water in a moment. He has satisfied me that I am a commodity in the market, and that I ought to set myself at a high price. So you see, he who would have me must bid for me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I shall discuss that point with Mr. Mac Quedy.

LADY CLARINDA.

Not a word for your life. Our flirtation is our own secret. Let it remain so.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Flirtation, Clarinda! Is that all that the most ardent——

LADY CLARINDA.

Now, don't be rhapsodical here. Next to Mr. Mac Quedy is Mr. Skionar, a sort of poetical philosopher, a curious compound of the intense and the mystical. He abominates all the ideas of Mr. Mac Quedy, and settles every thing by sentiment and intuition.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Then, I say, he is the wiser man.

LADY CLARINDA.

They are two oddities; but a little of them is amusing, and I like to hear them dispute. So you see I am in training for a philosopher myself.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Any philosophy, for heaven's sake, but the pound-shilling-and-pence philosophy of Mr. Mac Quedy.

LADY CLARINDA.

Why, they say that even Mr. Skionar, though he is a great dreamer, always dreams with his eyes open, or with one eye at any rate, which is an eye to his gain: but I believe that in this respect the

poor man has got an ill name by keeping bad company. He has two dear friends, Mr. Wilful Wontsee, and Mr. Rumblesack Shantsee, poets of some note, who used to see visions of Utopia, and pure republics beyond the Western deep: but finding that these El Dorados brought them no revenue, they turned their vision-seeing faculty into the more profitable channel of espying all sorts of virtues in the high and the mighty, who were able and willing to pay for the discovery.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I do not fancy these virtue-spyers.

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to Mr. Skionar, sits Mr. Chainmail, a good-looking young gentleman, as you see, with very antiquated tastes. He is fond of old poetry, and is something of a poet himself. He is deep in monkish literature, and holds that the best state of society was that of the twelfth century, when nothing was going forward but fighting, feasting, and praying, which he says are the three great purposes for which man was made. He laments bitterly over the inventions of gunpowder, steam, and gas, which he says have ruined the world. He lives within two or three miles, and has a large hall, adorned with rusty pikes, shields, helmets, swords, and tattered banners, and furnished with yew-tree chairs, and two long, old, worm-eaten oak tables, where he dines with all his household, after the fashion of his favourite age. He wants us all to dine with him, and I believe we shall go.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

That will be something new at any rate.

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to him is Mr. Toogood, the co-operationist, who will have neither fighting nor praying; but wants to parcel out the world into squares like a chess-board, with a community on each, raising every thing for one another, with a great steam-engine to serve them in common for tailor and hosier, kitchen and cook.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

He is the strangest of the set, so far.

LADY CLARINDA.

This brings us to the bottom of the table, where sits my humble servant, Mr. Crotchet the younger. I ought not to describe him.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I entreat you do.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, I really have very little to say in his favour.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I do not wish to hear any thing in his favour; and I rejoice to hear you say so, because——

LADY CLARINDA.

Do not flatter yourself. If I take him, it will be to please my father, and to have a town and country-house, and plenty of servants, and a carriage and an opera-box, and make some of my acquaintance who have married for love, or for rank, or for any thing but money, die for envy of my jewels. You do not think I would take

him for himself. Why he is very smooth and spruce, as far as his dress goes; but as to his face, he looks as if he had tumbled headlong into a volcano, and been thrown up again among the cinders.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I cannot believe, that, speaking thus of him, you mean to take him at all.

LADY CLARINDA.

Oh! I am out of my teens. I have been very much in love; but now I am come to years of discretion, and must think, like other people, of settling myself advantageously. He was in love with a banker's daughter, and cast her off on her father's bankruptcy, and the poor girl has gone to hide herself in some wild place.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

She must have a strange taste, if she pines for the loss of him.

LADY CLARINDA.

They say he was good-looking, till his bubble-schemes, as they call them, stamped him with the physiognomy of a desperate gambler. I suspect he has still a *penchant* towards his first flame. If he takes me, it will be for my rank and connection, and the second seat of the borough of Rogueingrain. So we shall meet on equal terms, and shall enjoy all the blessedness of expecting nothing from each other.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You can expect no security with such an adventurer.

LADY CLARINDA.

I shall have the security of a good settlement, and then if *andare al diavolo* be his destiny, he may go, you know, by himself. He is almost always dreaming and *distrait*. It is very likely that some great reverse is in store for him: but that will not concern me, you perceive.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You torture me, Clarinda, with the bare possibility.

LADY CLARINDA.

Hush! Here is music to soothe your troubled spirit. Next to him, on this side, sits the dilettante composer, Mr. Trillo; they say his name was O'Trill, and he has taken the O from the beginning, and put it at the end. I do not know how this may be. He plays well on the violoncello, and better on the piano: sings agreeably; has a talent at verse-making, and improvises a song with some felicity. He is very agreeable company in the evening, with his instruments and music-books. He maintains that the sole end of all enlightened society is to get up a good opera, and laments that wealth, genius, and energy, are squandered upon other pursuits, to the neglect of this one great matter.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

That is a very pleasant fancy at any rate.

LADY CLARINDA.

I assure you he has a great deal to say for it. Well, next to him again, is Dr. Morbific, who has been all over the world to prove that there is no

such thing as contagion; and has inoculated himself with plague, yellow fever, and every variety of pestilence, and is still alive to tell the story. I am very shy of him, too; for I look on him as a walking phial of wrath, corked full of all infections, and not to be touched without extreme hazard.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

This is the strangest fellow of all.

LADY CLARINDA.

Next to him sits Mr. Philpot,[1] the geographer, who thinks of nothing but the heads and tails of rivers, and lays down the streams of Terra Incognita as accurately as if he had been there. He is a person of pleasant fancy, and makes a sort of fairy land of every country he touches, from the Frozen Ocean to the Deserts of Zahara.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

How does he settle matters with Mr. Firedamp?

LADY CLARINDA.

You see Mr. Firedamp has got as far as possible out of his way. Next to him is Sir Simon Steeltrap, of Steeltrap Lodge, Member for Crouching-Curtown, Justice of Peace for the county, and Lord of the United Manors of Spring-gun and Treadmill; a great preserver of game and public morals. By administering the laws which he assists in making, he disposes, at his pleasure, of the land and its live stock, including all the two-legged varieties, with and without feathers, in a circumference of several miles round Steeltrap

[1] ΦΙΛοΠΟΤαμος. *Fluviorum amans.*

Lodge. He has enclosed commons and woodlands; abolished cottage-gardens; taken the village cricket-ground into his own park, out of pure regard to the sanctity of Sunday; shut up footpaths and alehouses, (all but those which belong to his electioneering friend, Mr. Quassia, the brewer;) put down fairs and fiddlers; committed many poachers; shot a few; convicted one third of the peasantry; suspected the rest; and passed nearly the whole of them through a wholesome course of prison discipline, which has finished their education at the expense of the county.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

He is somewhat out of his element here: among such a diversity of opinions he will hear some he will not like.

LADY CLARINDA.

It was rather ill-judged in Mr. Crotchet to invite him to-day. But the art of assorting company is above these *parvenus*. They invite a certain number of persons without considering how they harmonise with each other. Between Sir Simon and you is the Reverend Doctor Folliott. He is said to be an excellent scholar, and is fonder of books than the majority of his cloth; he is very fond, also, of the good things of this world. He is of an admirable temper, and says rude things in a pleasant half-earnest manner, that nobody can take offence with. And next to him, again, is one Captain Fitzchrome, who is very much in love with a certain person that does not mean to have any thing to say to him, because she can better her fortune by taking somebody else.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

And next to him again, is the beautiful, the accomplished, the witty, the fascinating, the tormenting Lady Clarinda, who traduces herself to the said captain by assertions which it would drive him crazy to believe.

LADY CLARINDA.

Time will show, sir. And now we have gone the round of the table.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

But I must say, though I know you had always a turn for sketching characters, you surprise me by your observation, and especially by your attention to opinions.

LADY CLARINDA.

Well, I will tell you a secret: I am writing a novel.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

A novel!

LADY CLARINDA.

Yes, a novel. And I shall get a little finery by it: trinkets and fal-lals, which I cannot get from papa. You must know I have been reading several fashionable novels, the fashionable this, and the fashionable that; and I thought to myself, why I can do better than any of these myself. So I wrote a chapter or two, and sent them as a specimen to Mr. Puffall, the bookseller, telling him they were to be a part of the fashionable something or other, and he offered me, I will not say how much, to finish it in three volumes, and let him pay all the newspapers for recommending

it as the work of a lady of quality, who had made very free with the characters of her acquaintance.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Surely you have not done so ?

LADY CLARINDA.

Oh, no ; I leave that to Mr. Eavesdrop. But Mr. Puffall made it a condition that I should let him say so.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

A strange recommendation.

LADY CLARINDA.

Oh, nothing else will do. And it seems you may give yourself any character you like, and the newspapers will print it as if it came from themselves. I have commended you to three of our friends here, as an economist, a transcendentalist, and a classical scholar ; and if you wish to be renowned through the world for these, or any other accomplishments, the newspapers will confirm you in their possession for half-a-guinea a piece.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Truly, the praise of such gentry must be a feather in any one's cap.

LADY CLARINDA.

So you will see, some morning, that my novel is ' the most popular production of the day.' This is Mr. Puffall's favourite phrase. He makes the newspapers say it of every thing he publishes. But ' the day,' you know, is a very convenient phrase ; it allows of three hundred and sixty-five ' most popular productions ' in a year. And in leap-year one more.

CHAPTER VI

THEORIES.

> But when they came to shape the model,
> Not one could fit the other's noddle.—BUTLER.

MEANWHILE, the last course, and the dessert, passed by. When the ladies had withdrawn, young Crotchet addressed the company.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

There is one point in which philosophers of all classes seem to be agreed; that they only want money to regenerate the world.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No doubt of it. Nothing is so easy as to lay down the outlines of perfect society. There wants nothing but money to set it going. I will explain myself clearly and fully by reading a paper. (*Producing a large scroll.*) 'In the infancy of society—'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Pray, Mr. Mac Quedy, how is it that all gentlemen of your nation begin every thing they write with the 'infancy of society'?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh, sir, it is the simplest way to begin at the beginning. 'In the infancy of society, when government was invented to save a percentage; say two and a half per cent.—'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I will not say any such thing.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, say any percentage you please.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I will not say any percentage at all.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

'On the principle of the division of labour—'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Government was invented to spend a percentage.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

To save a percentage.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir, to spend a percentage; and a good deal more than two and a half per cent. Two hundred and fifty per cent.; that is intelligible.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

'In the infancy of society—'

MR. TOOGOOD.

Never mind the infancy of society. The question is of society in its maturity. Here is what it should be. (*Producing a paper.*) I have laid it down in a diagram.

MR. SKIONAR.

Before we proceed to the question of government, we must nicely discriminate the boundaries of sense, understanding, and reason. Sense is a receptivity—

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

We are proceeding too fast. Money being all that is wanted to regenerate society, I will put

into the hands of this company a large sum for the purpose. Now let us see how to dispose of it.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

We will begin by taking a committee-room in London, where we will dine together once a week, to deliberate.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

If the money is to go in deliberative dinners, you may set me down for a committee man and honorary caterer.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Next, you must all learn political economy, which I will teach you, very compendiously, in lectures over the bottle.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I hate lectures over the bottle. But pray, sir, what is political economy ?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Political economy is to the state what domestic economy is to the family.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No such thing, sir. In the family there is a *paterfamilias*, who regulates the distribution, and takes care that there shall be no such thing in the household as one dying of hunger, while another dies of surfeit. In the state it is all hunger at one end, and all surfeit at the other. Matchless claret, Mr. Crotchet.

MR. CROTCHET.

Vintage of fifteen, doctor.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

The family consumes, and so does the state.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Consumes, sir! Yes: but the mode, the proportions; there is the essential difference between the state and the family. Sir, I hate false analogies.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, the analogy is not essential. Distribution will come under its proper head.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Come where it will, the distribution of the state is in no respect analogous to the distribution of the family. The *paterfamilias*, sir: the *paterfamilias*.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, let that pass. The family consumes, and in order to consume, it must have supply.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, Adam and Eve knew that, when they delved and span.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Very true, sir (*reproducing his scroll*). 'In the infancy of society—'

MR. TOOGOOD.

The reverend gentleman has hit the nail on the head. It is the distribution that must be looked to: it is the *paterfamilias* that is wanting in the state. Now here I have provided him. (*Reproducing his diagram.*)

MR. TRILLO.

Apply the money, sir, to building and endowing an opera house, where the ancient altar of Bacchus may flourish, and justice may be done to sublime compositions. (*Producing a part of a manuscript opera.*)

MR. SKIONAR.

No, sir, build *sacella* for transcendental oracles to teach the world how to see through a glass darkly. (*Producing a scroll.*)

MR. TRILLO.

See through an opera-glass brightly.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

See through a wine-glass, full of claret: then you see both darkly and brightly. But, gentlemen, if you are all in the humour for reading papers, I will read you the first half of my next Sunday's sermon. (*Producing a paper.*)

OMNES.

No sermon! No sermon!

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then I move that our respective papers be committed to our respective pockets.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Political economy is divided into two great branches, production and consumption.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Yes, sir; there are two great classes of men: those who produce much and consume little; and those who consume much and produce nothing.

The *fruges consumere nati* have the best of it. Eh, captain! you remember the characteristics of a great man according to Aristophanes: ὅστις γε πίνειν οἶδε καὶ βίνειν μόνον. Ha! ha! ha! Well, captain, even in these tight-laced days, the obscurity of a learned language allows a little pleasantry.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Very true, sir: the pleasantry and the obscurity go together: they are all one, as it were;—to me at any rate. (*aside.*)

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Now, sir—

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Pray, sir, let your science alone, or you will put me under the painful necessity of demolishing it bit by bit, as I have done your exordium. I will undertake it any morning; but it is too hard exercise after dinner.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Well, sir, in the meantime I hold my science established.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

And I hold it demolished.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Pray, gentlemen, pocket your manuscripts; fill your glasses; and consider what we shall do with our money.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Build lecture rooms, and schools for all.

MR. TRILLO.

Revive the Athenian theatre: regenerate the lyrical drama.

MR. TOOGOOD.

Build a grand co-operative parallelogram, with a steam-engine in the middle for a maid of all work.

MR. FIREDAMP.

Drain the country, and get rid of *malaria*, by abolishing duck-ponds.

DR. MORBIFIC.

Found a philanthropic college of anti-contagionists, where all the members shall be inoculated with the virus of all known diseases. Try the experiment on a grand scale.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Build a great dining-hall: endow it with beef and ale, and hang the hall round with arms to defend the provisions.

MR. HENBANE.

Found a toxicological institution for trying all poisons and antidotes. I myself have killed a frog twelve times, and brought him to life eleven; but the twelfth time he died. I have a phial of the drug which killed him in my pocket, and shall not rest till I have discovered its antidote.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I move that the last speaker be dispossessed of his phial, and that it be forthwith thrown into the Thames.

MR. HENBANE.

How, sir? my invaluable, and in the present state of human knowledge, infallible poison?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Let the frogs have all the advantage of it.

MR. CROTCHET.

Consider, doctor, the fish might participate. Think of the salmon.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then let the owner's right-hand neighbour swallow it.

MR. EAVESDROP.

Me, sir! What have I done, sir, that I am to be poisoned, sir?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, you have published a character of your facetious friend, the Reverend Doctor F., wherein you have sketched off me; me, sir, even to my nose and wig. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

MR. EAVESDROP.

Sir, it is all good humoured: all in *bonhommie*: all friendly and complimentary.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, the bottle, *la Dive Bouteille*, is a recondite oracle, which makes an Eleusinian temple of the circle in which it moves. He who reveals its mysteries must die. Therefore, let the dose be administered. *Fiat experimentum in animâ vili.*

MR. EAVESDROP.

Sir, you are very facetious at my expense.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, you have been very unfacetious, very inficete at mine. You have dished me up, like a savory omelette, to gratify the appetite of the reading rabble for gossip. The next time, sir, I will respond with the *argumentum baculinum*. Print that, sir; put it on record as a promise of the Reverend Doctor F., which shall be most faithfully kept, with an exemplary bamboo.

MR. EAVESDROP.

Your cloth protects you, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My bamboo shall protect me, sir.

MR. CROTCHET.

Doctor, doctor, you are growing too polemical.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, my blood boils. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

MR. CROTCHET.

Doctor! Doctor!

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Pray, gentlemen, return to the point. How shall we employ our fund?

MR. PHILPOT.

Surely in no way so beneficially as in exploring rivers. Send a fleet of steam-boats down the

Niger, and another up the Nile. So shall you civilise Africa, and establish stocking factories in Abyssinia and Bambo.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

With all submission, breeches and petticoats must precede stockings. Send out a crew of tailors. Try if the king of Bambo will invest inexpressibles.

MR. CROTCHET, JUN.

Gentlemen, it is not for partial, but for general benefit, that this fund is proposed: a grand and universally applicable scheme for the amelioration of the condition of man.

SEVERAL VOICES.

That is my scheme. I have not heard a scheme but my own that has a grain of common sense.

MR. TRILLO.

Gentlemen, you inspire me. Your last exclamation runs itself into a chorus, and sets itself to music. Allow me to lead, and to hope for your voices in harmony.

After careful meditation,
And profound deliberation,
On the various pretty projects which have just been shown,
Not a scheme in agitation,
For the world's amelioration,
Has a grain of common sense in it, except my own.

SEVERAL VOICES.

We are not disposed to join in any such chorus.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, of all these schemes, I am for Mr. Trillo's. Regenerate the Athenian theatre. My classical friend here, the captain, will vote with me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I, sir ? oh ! of course, sir.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Surely, captain, I rely on you to uphold political economy.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Me, sir ? oh ! to be sure, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Pray, sir, will political economy uphold the Athenian theatre ?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Surely not. It would be a very unproductive investment.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then the captain votes against you. What, sir, did not the Athenians, the wisest of nations, appropriate to their theatre their most sacred and intangible fund ? Did not they give to melopœia, choregraphy, and the sundry forms of didascalics, the precedence of all other matters, civil and military ? Was it not their law, that even the proposal to divert this fund to any other purpose should be punished with death ? But, sir, I further propose that the Athenian theatre being resuscitated, the admission shall be free to all who can expound the Greek choruses, constructively, mythologically, and metrically, and to none others. So shall all the world learn Greek : Greek, the Alpha and Omega of all knowledge. At him who sits not in the theatre, shall be pointed the finger of scorn : he shall be called in the highway of the city, ' a fellow without Greek.'

MR. TRILLO.

But the ladies, sir, the ladies.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Every man may take in a lady : and she who can construe and metricise a chorus, shall, if she so please, pass in by herself.

MR. TRILLO.

But, sir, you will shut me out of my own theatre. Let there at least be a double passport, Greek and Italian.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir ; I am inexorable. No Greek, no theatre.

MR. TRILLO.

Sir, I cannot consent to be shut out from my own theatre.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You see how it is, Squire Crotchet the younger ; you can scarcely find two to agree on a scheme, and no two of those can agree on the details. Keep your money in your pocket. And so ends the fund for regenerating the world.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, by no means. We are all agreed on deliberative dinners.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true ; we will dine and discuss. We will sing with Robin Hood, ' If I drink water while this doth last ; ' and while it lasts we will have no adjournment, if not to the Athenian theatre.

MR. TRILLO.

Well, gentlemen, I hope this chorus at least will please you :

If I drink water while this doth last,
May I never again drink wine :
For how can a man, in his life of a span,
Do any thing better than dine ?
We'll dine and drink, and say if we think
That any thing better can be ;
And when we have dined, wish all mankind
May dine as well as we.

And though a good wish will fill no dish,
And brim no cup with sack,
Yet thoughts will spring, as the glasses ring,
To illume our studious track.
On the brilliant dreams of our hopeful schemes
The light of the flask shall shine ;
And we'll sit till day, but we'll find the way
To drench the world with wine.

The schemes for the world's regeneration evaporated in a tumult of voices.

CHAPTER VII

THE SLEEPING VENUS.

Quoth he : In all my life till now,
I ne'er saw so profane a show.—BUTLER.

THE library of Crotchet castle was a large and well-furnished apartment, opening on one side into an anteroom, on the other into a music-room. It had several tables stationed at convenient distances ; one consecrated to the novelties of literature, another to the novelties of embellishment ; others unoccupied, and at the disposal of the company. The walls were covered with a copious collection of ancient and modern books ;

the ancient having been selected and arranged by the Reverend Doctor Folliott. In the anteroom were card-tables ; in the music-room were various instruments, all popular operas, and all fashionable music. In this suite of apartments, and not in the drawing-room, were the evenings of Crotchet castle usually passed.

The young ladies were in the music-room ; Miss Crotchet at the piano, Lady Clarinda, at the harp, playing and occasionally singing, at the suggestion of Mr. Trillo, portions of *Matilde di Shabran*. Lord Bossnowl was turning over the leaves for Miss Crotchet ; the captain was performing the same office for Lady Clarinda, but with so much more attention to the lady than the book, that he often made sad work with the harmony, by turning over two leaves together. On these occasions Miss Crotchet paused, Lady Clarinda laughed, Mr. Trillo scolded, Lord Bossnowl yawned, the captain apologised, and the performance proceeded.

In the library, Mr. Mac Quedy was expounding political economy to the Reverend Doctor Folliott, who was *pro more* demolishing its doctrines *seriatim*.

Mr. Chainmail was in hot dispute with Mr. Skionar, touching the physical and moral well-being of man. Mr. Skionar was enforcing his friend Mr. Shantsee's views of moral discipline ; maintaining that the sole thing needful for man in this world, was loyal and pious education ; the giving men good books to read, and enough of the hornbook to read them ; with a judicious interspersion of the lessons of Old Restraint, which was his poetic name for the parish stocks. Mr. Chainmail, on the other hand, stood up for the

exclusive necessity of beef and ale, lodging and raiment, wife and children, courage to fight for them all, and armour wherewith to do so.

Mr. Henbane had got his face scratched, and his finger bitten, by the cat, in trying to catch her for a second experiment in killing and bringing to life; and Doctor Morbific was comforting him with a disquisition, to prove that there were only four animals having the power to communicate hydrophobia, of which the cat was one; and that it was not necessary that the animal should be in a rabid state, the nature of the wound being every thing, and the idea of contagion a delusion. Mr. Henbane was listening very lugubriously to this dissertation.

Mr. Philpot had seized on Mr. Firedamp, and pinned him down to a map of Africa, on which he was tracing imaginary courses of mighty inland rivers, terminating in lakes and marshes, where they were finally evaporated by the heat of the sun; and Mr. Firedamp's hair was standing on end at the bare imagination of the mass of *malaria* that must be engendered by the operation. Mr. Toogood had begun explaining his diagrams to Sir Simon Steeltrap; but Sir Simon grew testy, and told Mr. Toogood that the promulgators of such doctrines ought to be consigned to the treadmill. The philanthropist walked off from the country gentleman, and proceeded to hold forth to young Crotchet, who stood silent, as one who listens, but in reality without hearing a syllable. Mr. Crotchet senior, as the master of the house, was left to entertain himself with his own meditations, till the Reverend Doctor Folliott tore himself from Mr. Mac Quedy, and proceeded to expostulate with Mr. Crotchet on a delicate topic.

There was an Italian painter, who obtained the name of *Il Bragatore*, by the superinduction of inexpressibles on the naked Apollos and Bacchuses of his betters. The fame of this worthy remained one and indivisible, till a set of heads, which had been, by a too common mistake of nature's journeymen, stuck upon magisterial shoulders, as the Corinthian capitals of 'fair round bellies with fat capon lined,' but which nature herself had intended for the noddles of porcelain mandarins, promulgated simultaneously from the east and the west of London, an order that no plaster-of-Paris Venus should appear in the streets without petticoats. Mr. Crotchet, on reading this order in the evening paper, which, by the postman's early arrival, was always laid on his breakfast-table, determined to fill his house with Venuses of all sizes and kinds. In pursuance of this resolution, came packages by water-carriage, containing an infinite variety of Venuses. There were the Medicean Venus, and the Bathing Venus; the Uranian Venus, and the Pandemian Venus; the Crouching Venus, and the Sleeping Venus; the Venus rising from the sea, the Venus with the apple of Paris, and the Venus with the armour of Mars.

The Reverend Doctor Folliott had been very much astonished at this unexpected display. Disposed, as he was, to hold, that whatever had been in Greece, was right; he was more than doubtful of the propriety of throwing open the classical *adytum* to the illiterate profane. Whether, in his interior mind, he was at all influenced, either by the consideration that it would be for the credit of his cloth, with some of his vice-suppressing neighbours, to be able to say that

he had expostulated; or by curiosity, to try what sort of defence his city-bred friend, who knew the classics only by translations, and whose reason was always a little a-head of his knowledge, would make for his somewhat ostentatious display of liberality in matters of taste: is a question, on which the learned may differ: but, after having duly deliberated on two full-sized casts of the Uranian and Pandemian Venus, in niches on each side of the chimney, and on three alabaster figures, in glass cases, on the mantelpiece, he proceeded, peirastically, to open his fire.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

These little alabaster figures on the mantelpiece, Mr. Crotchet, and those large figures in the niches may I take the liberty to ask you what they are intended to represent?

MR. CROTCHET.

Venus, sir; nothing more, sir; just Venus.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

May I ask you, sir, why they are there?

MR. CROTCHET.

To be looked at, sir; just to be looked at: the reason for most things in a gentleman's house being in it at all; from the paper on the walls, and the drapery of the curtains, even to the books in the library, of which the most essential part is the appearance of the back.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true, sir. As great philosophers hold that the *esse* of things is *percipi*, so a gentleman's

furniture exists to be looked at. Nevertheless, sir, there are some things more fit to be looked at than others; for instance, there is nothing more fit to be looked at than the outside of a book. It is, as I may say, from repeated experience, a pure and unmixed pleasure to have a goodly volume lying before you, and to know that you may open it if you please, and need not open it unless you please. It is a resource against *ennui*, if *ennui* should come upon you. To have the resource and not to feel the *ennui*, to enjoy your bottle in the present, and your book in the indefinite future, is a delightful condition of human existence. There is no place, in which a man can move or sit, in which the outside of a book can be otherwise than an innocent and becoming spectacle. Touching this matter, there cannot, I think, be two opinions. But with respect to your Venuses there can be, and indeed there are, two very distinct opinions. Now, sir, that little figure in the centre of the mantelpiece,—as a grave *paterfamilias*, Mr. Crotchet, with a fair nubile daughter, whose eyes are like the fish-pools of Heshbon,—I would ask you if you hold that figure to be altogether delicate?

MR. CROTCHET.

The Sleeping Venus, sir? Nothing can be more delicate than the entire contour of the figure, the flow of the hair on the shoulders and neck, the form of the feet and fingers. It is altogether a most delicate morsel.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Why, in that sense, perhaps, it is as delicate

as whitebait in July. But the attitude, sir, the attitude.

MR. CROTCHET.

Nothing can be more natural, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That is the very thing, sir. It is too natural: too natural, sir: it lies for all the world like - - I make no doubt, the pious cheesemonger, who recently broke its plaster fac-simile over the head of the itinerant vendor, was struck by a certain similitude to the position of his own sleeping beauty, and felt his noble wrath thereby justly aroused.

MR. CROTCHET.

Very likely, sir. In my opinion, the cheesemonger was a fool, and the justice who sided with him was a greater.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Fool, sir, is a harsh term: call not thy brother a fool.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, neither the cheesemonger nor the justice is a brother of mine.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, we are all brethren.

MR. CROTCHET.

Yes, sir, as the hangman is of the thief; the 'squire of the poacher; the judge of the libeller; the lawyer of his client; the statesman of his colleague; the bubble-blower of the bubble-buyer; the slave-driver of the negro: as these are brethren, so am I and the worthies in question.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

To be sure, sir, in these instances, and in many others, the term brother must be taken in its utmost latitude of interpretation: we are all brothers, nevertheless. But to return to the point. Now these two large figures, one with drapery on the lower half of the body, and the other with no drapery at all; upon my word, sir, it matters not what godfathers and godmothers may have promised and vowed for the children of this world, touching the devil and other things to be renounced, if such figures as those are to be put before their eyes.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, the naked figure is the Pandemian Venus, and the half-draped figure is the Uranian Venus; and I say, sir, that figure realises the finest imaginings of Plato, and is the personification of the most refined and exalted feeling of which the human mind is susceptible; the love of pure, ideal, intellectual beauty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I am aware, sir, that Plato, in his Symposium, discourseth very eloquently touching the Uranian and Pandemian Venus: but you must remember that, in our Universities, Plato is held to be little better than a misleader of youth; and they have shown their contempt for him, not only by never reading him (a mode of contempt in which they deal very largely), but even by never printing a complete edition of him; although they have printed many ancient books, which nobody suspects to have been ever read on the spot,

except by a person attached to the press, who is therefore emphatically called 'the reader.'

MR. CROTCHET.

Well, sir?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Why, sir, to 'the reader' aforesaid (supposing either of our Universities to have printed an edition of Plato), or to any one else who can be supposed to have read Plato, or indeed to be ever likely to do so, I would very willingly show these figures; because to such they would, I grant you, be the outward and visible signs of poetical and philosophical ideas: but, to the multitude, the gross carnal multitude, they are but two beautiful women, one half undressed, and the other quite so.

MR. CROTCHET.

Then, sir, let the multitude look upon them and learn modesty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I must say that, if I wished my footman to learn modesty, I should not dream of sending him to school to a naked Venus.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, ancient sculpture is the true school of modesty. But where the Greeks had modesty, we have cant; where they had poetry, we have cant; where they had patriotism, we have cant; where they had any thing that exalts, delights, or adorns humanity, we have nothing but cant, cant, cant. And, sir, to show my contempt for cant in all its shapes, I have adorned my house with the

Greek Venus, in all her shapes, and am ready to fight her battle against all the societies that ever were instituted for the suppression of truth and beauty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My dear sir, I am afraid you are growing warm. Pray be cool. Nothing contributes so much to good digestion as to be perfectly cool after dinner.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, the Lacedæmonian virgins wrestled naked with young men: and they grew up, as the wise Lycurgus had foreseen, into the most modest of women, and the most exemplary of wives and mothers.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very likely, sir; but the Athenian virgins did no such thing, and they grew up into wives who stayed at home,—stayed at home, sir; and looked after the husband's dinner,—his dinner, sir, you will please to observe.

MR. CROTCHET.

And what was the consequence of that, sir? that they were such very insipid persons that the husband would not go home to eat his dinner, but preferred the company of some Aspasia, or Lais.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Two very different persons, sir, give me leave to remark.

MR. CROTCHET.

Very likely, sir; but both too good to be married in Athens.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, Lais was a Corinthian.

MR. CROTCHET.

'Od's vengeance, sir, some Aspasia and any other Athenian name of the same sort of person you like——

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I do not like the sort of person at all: the sort of person I like, as I have already implied, is a modest woman, who stays at home and looks after her husband's dinner.

MR. CROTCHET.

Well, sir, that was not the taste of the Athenians. They preferred the society of women who would not have made any scruple about sitting as models to Praxiteles; as you know, sir, very modest women in Italy did to Canova: one of whom, an Italian countess, being asked by an English lady, 'how she could bear it?' answered, 'Very well; there was a good fire in the room.'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, the English lady should have asked how the Italian lady's husband could bear it. The phials of my wrath would overflow if poor dear Mrs. Folliott——: sir, in return for your story, I will tell you a story of my ancestor, Gilbert Folliott. The devil haunted him, as he did Saint Francis, in the likeness of a beautiful damsel; but all he could get from the exemplary Gilbert was an admonition to wear a stomacher and longer petticoats.

MR. CROTCHET.

Sir, your story makes for my side of the question.

It proves that the devil, in the likeness of a fair damsel, with short petticoats and no stomacher, was almost too much for Gilbert Folliott. The force of the spell was in the drapery.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Bless my soul, sir!

MR. CROTCHET.

Give me leave, sir. Diderot——

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Who was he, sir?

MR. CROTCHET.

Who was he, sir? the sublime philosopher, the father of the encyclopædia, of all the encyclopædias that have ever been printed.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Bless me, sir, a terrible progeny! they belong to the tribe of *Incubi*.

MR. CROTCHET.

The great philosopher, Diderot——

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, Diderot is not a man after my heart. Keep to the Greeks, if you please; albeit this Sleeping Venus is not an antique.

MR. CROTCHET.

Well, sir, the Greeks: why do we call the Elgin marbles inestimable? Simply because they are true to nature. And why are they so superior in that point to all modern works, with all our greater

knowledge of anatomy? Why, sir, but because the Greeks, having no cant, had better opportunities of studying models?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I deny our greater knowledge of anatomy. But I shall take the liberty to employ, on this occasion, the *argumentum ad hominem*. Would you have allowed Miss Crotchet to sit for a model to Canova?

MR. CROTCHET.

Yes, sir.

'God bless my soul, sir!' exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, throwing himself back into a chair, and flinging up his heels, with the premeditated design of giving emphasis to his exclamation: but by miscalculating his *impetus*, he overbalanced his chair, and laid himself on the carpet in a right angle, of which his back was the base.

CHAPTER VIII

SCIENCE AND CHARITY

Chi sta nel mondo un par d'ore contento,
Nè gli vien tolta, ovver contaminata,
Quella sua pace in veruno momento,
Può dir che Giove drittamente il guata.

FORTEGUERRI.

THE Reverend Doctor Folliott took his departure about ten o'clock, to walk home to his vicarage. There was no moon; but the night was bright and clear, and afforded him as much light as he needed. He paused a moment by the Roman camp, to listen to the nightingale; repeated to

himself a passage of Sophocles; proceeded through the park gate, and entered the narrow lane that led to the village. He walked on in a very pleasant mood of the state called *reverie*; in which fish and wine, Greek and political economy, the Sleeping Venus he had left behind and poor dear Mrs. Folliott, to whose fond arms he was returning, passed as in a *camera obscura* over the tablets of his imagination. Presently the image of Mr. Eavesdrop, with a printed sketch of the Reverend Doctor F., presented itself before him, and he began mechanically to flourish his bamboo. The movement was prompted by his good genius, for the uplifted bamboo received the blow of a ponderous cudgel, which was intended for his head. The reverend gentleman recoiled two or three paces, and saw before him a couple of ruffians, who were preparing to renew the attack, but whom, with two swings of his bamboo, he laid with cracked sconces on the earth, where he proceeded to deal with them like corn beneath the flail of the thresher. One of them drew a pistol, which went off in the very act of being struck aside by the bamboo, and lodged a bullet in the brain of the other. There was then only one enemy, who vainly struggled to rise, every effort being attended with a new and more signal prostration. The fellow roared for mercy. 'Mercy, rascal!' cried the divine; 'what mercy were you going to show me, villain? What! I warrant me, you thought it would be an easy matter, and no sin, to rob and murder a parson on his way home from dinner. You said to yourself, doubtless, "We'll waylay the fat parson (you irreverent knave) as he waddles home (you disparaging ruffian), half-seas-over

(you calumnious vagabond).'' And with every dyslogistic term, which he supposed had been applied to himself, he inflicted a new bruise on his rolling and roaring antagonist. 'Ah, rogue!' he proceeded; 'you can roar now, marauder; you were silent enough when you devoted my brains to dispersion under your cudgel. But seeing that I cannot bind you, and that I intend you not to escape, and that it would be dangerous to let you rise, I will disable you in all your members; I will contund you as Thestylis did strong-smelling herbs,[1] in the quality whereof you do most gravely partake, as my nose beareth testimony, ill weed that you are. I will beat you to a jelly, and I will then roll you into the ditch, to lie till the constable comes for you, thief.'

'Hold! hold! reverend sir,' exclaimed the penitent culprit, 'I am disabled already in every finger, and in every joint. I will roll myself into the ditch, reverend sir.'

'Stir not, rascal,' returned the divine, 'stir not so much as the quietest leaf above you, or my bamboo rebounds on your body, like hail in a thunder storm. Confess speedily, villain; are you simple thief, or would you have manufactured me into a subject, for the benefit of science? Ay, miscreant caitiff, you would have made me a subject for science, would you? You are a schoolmaster abroad, are you? You are marching with a detachment of the march of mind, are you? You are a member of the Steam Intellect Society, are you? You swear by the learned friend, do you?'

[1] Thestylis . . . . .
. . . . herbas contundit olentes.
VIRG. *Ecl.* ii. 10, 11.

'Oh, no! reverend sir,' answered the criminal, 'I am innocent of all these offences, whatever they are, reverend sir. The only friend I had in the world is lying dead beside me, reverend sir.'

The reverend gentleman paused a moment, and leaned on his bamboo. The culprit, bruised as he was, sprang on his legs, and went off in double quick time. The doctor gave him chase, and had nearly brought him within arm's length, when the fellow turned at right angles, and sprang clean over a deep dry ditch. The divine, following with equal ardour, and less dexterity, went down over head and ears into a thicket of nettles. Emerging with much discomposure, he proceeded to the village, and roused the constable; but the constable found, on reaching the scene of action, that the dead man was gone, as well as his living accomplice.

'Oh, the monster!' exclaimed the Reverend Doctor Folliott, 'he has made a subject for science of the only friend he had in the world.' 'Ay, my dear,' he resumed, the next morning at breakfast, 'if my old reading, and my early gymnastics (for as the great Hermann says, before I was demulced by the Muses, I was *ferocis ingenii puer, et ad arma quam ad literas paratior* [1]), had not imbued me indelibly with some of the holy rage of *Frère Jean des Entommeures*, I should be, at this moment, lying on the table of some flinty-hearted anatomist, who would have sliced and disjointed me as unscrupulously as I do these remnants of the capon and chine, wherewith you consoled yourself

[1] 'A boy of fierce disposition, more inclined to arms than to letters.'—HERMANN'S *Dedication of Homer's Hymns to his Preceptor Ilgen.*

yesterday for my absence at dinner. Phew! I have a noble thirst upon me, which I will quench with floods of tea.'

The reverend gentleman was interrupted by a messenger, who informed him that the Charity Commissioners requested his presence at the inn, where they were holding a sitting.

'The Charity Commissioners!' exclaimed the reverend gentleman, 'who on earth are they?'

The messenger could not inform him, and the reverend gentleman took his hat and stick, and proceeded to the inn.

On entering the best parlour, he saw three well-dressed and bulky gentlemen sitting at a table, and a fourth officiating as clerk, with an open book before him, and a pen in his hand. The churchwardens, who had been also summoned, were already in attendance.

The chief commissioner politely requested the reverend Doctor Folliott to be seated; and after the usual meteorological preliminaries had been settled by a resolution, *nem. con.*, that it was a fine day but very hot, the chief commissioner stated, that in virtue of the commission of Parliament, which they had the honour to hold, they were now to inquire into the state of the public charities of this village.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

The state of the public charities, sir, is exceedingly simple. There are none. The charities here are all private, and so private, that I for one know nothing of them.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

We have been informed, sir, that there is an

annual rent charged on the land of Hautbois, for the endowment and repair of an almshouse.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Hautbois! Hautbois!

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

The manorial farm of Hautbois, now occupied by Farmer Seedling, is charged with the endowment and maintenance of an almshouse.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT (*to the Churchwarden*).

How is this, Mr. Bluenose?

FIRST CHURCHWARDEN.

I really do not know, sir. What say you, Mr. Appletwig?

MR. APPLETWIG (*parish-clerk and schoolmaster; an old man*).

I do remember, gentlemen, to have been informed, that there did stand at the end of the village a ruined cottage, which had once been an almshouse, which was endowed and maintained, by an annual revenue of a mark and a half, or one pound sterling, charged some centuries ago on the farm of Hautbois; but the means, by the progress of time, having become inadequate to the end, the almshouse tumbled to pieces.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

But this is a right which cannot be abrogated by desuetude, and the sum of one pound per annum is still chargeable for charitable purposes on the manorial farm of Hautbois.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very well, sir.

MR. APPLETWIG.

But sir, the one pound per annum is still received by the parish, but was long ago, by an unanimous vote in open vestry, given to the minister.

THE THREE COMMISSIONERS (*unâ voce*).

The minister!

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

This is an unjustifiable proceeding.

SECOND COMMISSIONER.

A misappropriation of a public fund.

THIRD COMMISSIONER.

A flagrant perversion of a charitable donation.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

God bless my soul, gentlemen! I know nothing of this matter. How is this, Mr. Bluenose? Do I receive this one pound per annum?

FIRST CHURCHWARDEN.

Really, sir, I know no more about it than you do.

MR. APPLETWIG.

You certainly receive it, sir. It was voted to one of your predecessors. Farmer Seedling lumps it in with his tithes.

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

Lumps it in, sir! Lump in a charitable donation!

SECOND AND THIRD COMMISSIONER.

Oh-oh-oh-h-h!

FIRST COMMISSIONER.

Reverend sir, and gentlemen, officers of this parish, we are under the necessity of admonishing you that this is a most improper proceeding; and you are hereby duly admonished accordingly. Make a record, Mr. Milky.

MR. MILKY (*writing*).

The clergyman and churchwardens of the village of Hm-m-m-m gravely admonished. Hm-m-m-m.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Is that all, gentlemen?

THE COMMISSIONERS.

That is all, sir; and we wish you a good morning.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

A very good morning to you, gentlemen.

'What in the name of all that is wonderful, Mr. Bluenose,' said the Reverend Doctor Folliott, as he walked out of the inn, 'what in the name of all that is wonderful, can those fellows mean? They have come here in a chaise and four, to make a fuss about a pound per annum, which, after all, they leave as it was. I wonder who pays them for their trouble, and how much.'

MR. APPLETWIG.

The public pay for it, sir. It is a job of the learned friend whom you admire so much. It makes away with public money in salaries, and private money in lawsuits, and does no particle of good to any living soul.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Ay, ay, Mr. Appletwig: that is just the sort of public service to be looked for from the learned friend. Oh, the learned friend! the learned friend! He is the evil genius of every thing that falls in his way.

The reverend doctor walked off to Crotchet Castle, to narrate his misadventures, and exhale his budget of grievances on Mr. Mac Quedy, whom he considered a ringleader of the march of mind.

CHAPTER IX

THE VOYAGE

Οἱ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἀναβάντες ἐπέπλεον ὑγρὰ κέλευθα.
Mounting the bark, they cleft the watery ways.
HOMER.

FOUR beautiful cabined pinnaces, one for the ladies, one for the gentlemen, one for kitchen and servants, one for a dining-room and band of music, weighed anchor, on a fine July morning, from below Crotchet Castle, and were towed merrily, by strong trotting horses, against the stream of the Thames. They passed from the district of chalk, successively into the districts of clay, of sand-rock, of oolite, and so forth. Sometimes they dined in their floating dining-room, sometimes in tents, which they pitched on the dry smooth-shaven green of a newly-mown meadow; sometimes they left their vessels to see sights in the vicinity; sometimes they passed a day or two in a comfortable inn.

At Oxford, they walked about to see the curiosities of architecture, painted windows, and undisturbed libraries. The Reverend Doctor

Folliott laid a wager with Mr. Crotchet 'that in all their perlustrations they would not find a man reading,' and won it. 'Ay, sir,' said the reverend gentleman, 'this is still a seat of learning, on the principle of—once a captain always a captain. We may well ask, in these great reservoirs of books whereof no man ever draws a sluice, *Quorsum pertinuit stipare Platona Menandro?* [1] What is done here for the classics? Reprinting German editions on better paper. A great boast, verily! What for mathematics? What for metaphysics? What for history? What for any thing worth knowing? This was a seat of learning in the days of Friar Bacon. But the friar is gone, and his learning with him. Nothing of him is left but the immortal nose, which when his brazen head had tumbled to pieces, crying 'Time's past,' was the only palpable fragment among its minutely pulverised atoms, and which is still resplendent over the portals of its cognominal college. That nose, sir, is the only thing to which I shall take off my hat, in all this Babylon of buried literature.

MR. CROTCHET.

But, doctor, it is something to have a great reservoir of learning, at which some may draw if they please.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

But, here, good care is taken that nobody shall please. If even a small drop from the sacred fountain, πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβάς, as Callimachus has it, were carried off by any one, it would be evidence of something to hope for. But the

[1] Wherefore is Plato on Menander piled?—Hor. *Sat.* ii. 3. 11.

system of dissuasion from all good learning is brought here to a pitch of perfection that baffles the keenest aspirant. I run over to myself the names of the scholars of Germany, a glorious catalogue! but ask for those of Oxford —Where are they? The echoes of their courts, as vacant as their heads, will answer, Where are they? The tree shall be known by its fruit; and seeing that this great tree, with all its specious seeming, brings forth no fruit, I do denounce it as a barren fig.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I shall set you right on this point. We do nothing without motives. If learning get nothing but honour, and very little of that; and if the good things of this world, which ought to be the rewards of learning, become the mere gifts of self-interested patronage; you must not wonder if, in the finishing of education, the science which takes precedence of all others, should be the science of currying favour.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true, sir. Education is well finished, for all worldly purposes, when the head is brought into the state whereinto I am accustomed to bring a marrow-bone, when it has been set before me on a toast, with a white napkin wrapped round it. Nothing trundles along the high road of preferment so trimly as a well-biassed sconce, picked clean within, and polished without; *totus teres atque rotundus*.[1] The perfection of the finishing lies in the bias, which keeps it trundling in the given direction. There is good and sufficient reason

[1] All smooth and round.

for the fig being barren, but it is not therefore the less a barren fig.

At Godstow, they gathered hazel on the grave of Rosamond; and, proceeding on their voyage, fell into a discussion on legendary histories.

LADY CLARINDA.

History is but a tiresome thing in itself; it becomes more agreeable the more romance is mixed up with it. The great enchanter has made me learn many things which I should never have dreamed of studying, if they had not come to me in the form of amusement.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

What enchanter is that? There are two enchanters: he of the North, and he of the South.

MR. TRILLO.

Rossini?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Ay, there is another enchanter. But I mean the great enchanter of Covent Garden: he who, for more than a quarter of a century, has produced two pantomimes a year, to the delight of children of all ages, including myself at all ages. That is the enchanter for me. I am for the pantomimes. All the northern enchanter's romances put together would not furnish materials for half the southern enchanter's pantomimes.

LADY CLARINDA.

Surely you do not class literature with pantomime?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

In these cases I do. They are both one, with

a slight difference. The one is the literature of pantomime, the other is the pantomime of literature. There is the same variety of character, the same diversity of story, the same copiousness of incident, the same research into costume, the same display of heraldry, falconry, minstrelsy, scenery, monkery, witchery, devilry, robbery, poachery, piracy, fishery, gipsy-astrology, demonology, architecture, fortification, castrametation, navigation; the same running base of love and battle. The main difference is, that the one set of amusing fictions is told in music and action; the other in all the worst dialects of the English language. As to any sentence worth remembering, any moral or political truth, any thing having a tendency, however remote, to make men wiser or better, to make them think, to make them even think of thinking; they are both precisely alike: *nuspiam, nequaquam, nullibi, nullimodis.*

LADY CLARINDA.

Very amusing, however.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very amusing, very amusing.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

My quarrel with the northern enchanter is, that he has grossly misrepresented the twelfth century.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He has misrepresented every thing, or he would not have been very amusing. Sober truth is but dull matter to the reading rabble. The angler, who puts not on his hook the bait that best pleases

the fish, may sit all day on the bank without catching a gudgeon.[1]

MR. MAC QUEDY.

But how do you mean that he has misrepresented the twelfth century? By exhibiting some of its knights and ladies in the colours of refinement and virtue, seeing that they were all no better than ruffians, and something else that shall be nameless?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

By no means. By depicting them as much worse than they were, not, as you suppose, much better. No one would infer from his pictures that theirs was a much better state of society than this which we live in.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

No, nor was it. It was a period of brutality, ignorance, fanaticism, and tyranny; when the land was covered with castles, and every castle contained a gang of banditti, headed by a titled robber, who levied contributions with fire and sword; plundering, torturing, ravishing, burying his captives in loathsome dungeons, and broiling them on gridirons, to force from them the surrender of every particle of treasure which he suspected them of possessing; and fighting every now and then with the neighbouring lords, his conterminal bandits, for the right of marauding on the boundaries. This was the twelfth century, as depicted by all contemporary historians and poets.

[1] Eloquentiæ magister, nisi, tamquam piscator, cam imposuerit hamis escam, quam scierit appetituros esse pisciculos, sine spe prædæ moratur in scopulo.

PETRONIUS ARBITER.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, sir. Weigh the evidence of specific facts; you will find more good than evil. Who was England's greatest hero; the mirror of chivalry, the pattern of honour, the fountain of generosity, the model to all succeeding ages of military glory? Richard the First. There is a king of the twelfth century. What was the first step of liberty? Magna Charta. That was the best thing ever done by lords. There are lords of the twelfth century. You must remember, too, that these lords were petty princes, and made war on each other as legitimately as the heads of larger communities did or do. For their system of revenue, it was, to be sure, more rough and summary than that which has succeeded it, but it was certainly less searching and less productive. And as to the people, I content myself with these great points: that every man was armed, every man was a good archer, every man could and would fight effectively with sword or pike, or even with oaken cudgel: no man would live quietly without beef and ale; if he had them not, he fought till he either got them, or was put out of condition to want them. They were not, and could not be, subjected to that powerful pressure of all the other classes of society, combined by gunpowder, steam, and *fiscality*, which has brought them to that dismal degradation in which we see them now. And there are the people of the twelfth century.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

As to your king, the enchanter has done him ample justice, even in your own view. As to your lords and their ladies, he has drawn them too

favourably, given them too many of the false colours of chivalry, thrown too attractive a light on their abominable doings. As to the people, he keeps them so much in the back-ground, that he can hardly be said to have represented them at all, much less misrepresented them, which indeed he could scarcely do, seeing that, by your own showing, they were all thieves, ready to knock down any man for what they could not come by honestly.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, sir. They could come honestly by beef and ale, while they were left to their simple industry. When oppression interfered with them in that, then they stood on the defensive, and fought for what they were not permitted to come by quietly.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

If A, being aggrieved by B, knocks down C, do you call that standing on the defensive ?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

That depends on who or what C is.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Gentlemen, you will never settle this controversy, till you have first settled what is good for man in this world ; the great question, *de finibus*, which has puzzled all philosophers. If the enchanter has represented the twelfth century too brightly for one, and too darkly for the other of you, I should say, as an impartial man, he has represented it fairly. My quarrel with him is, that his works contain nothing worth quoting ; and a book that furnishes no quotations, is, *me judice*, no book—

it is a plaything. There is no question about the amusement—amusement of multitudes; but if he who amuses us most, is to be our enchanter κατ' ἐξοχήν, then my enchanter is the enchanter of Covent Garden.

CHAPTER X

THE VOYAGE, CONTINUED

Continuant nostre routte, navigasmes par trois jours *sans rien descouvrir*.—RABELAIS.

'THERE is a beautiful structure,' said Mr. Chainmail, as they glided by Lechlade church; 'a subject for the pencil, Captain. It is a question worth asking, Mr. Mac Quedy, whether the religious spirit which reared these edifices, and connected with them everywhere an asylum for misfortune and a provision for poverty, was not better than the commercial spirit, which has turned all the business of modern life into schemes of profit, and processes of fraud and extortion. I do not see, in all your boasted improvements, any compensation for the religious charity of the twelfth century. I do not see any compensation for that kindly feeling which, within their own little communities, bound the several classes of society together, while full scope was left for the development of natural character, wherein individuals differed as conspicuously as in costume. Now, we all wear one conventional dress, one conventional face; we have no bond of union, but pecuniary interest; we talk any thing that comes uppermost, for talking's sake, and without expecting to be believed; we have no nature, no simplicity, no picturesqueness: every thing about us is as

artificial and as complicated as our steam-machinery: our poetry is a kaleidoscope of false imagery, expressing no real feeling, portraying no real existence. I do not see any compensation for the poetry of the twelfth century.'

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I wonder to hear you, Mr. Chainmail, talking of the religious charity of a set of lazy monks and beggarly friars, who were much more occupied with taking than giving; of whom, those who were in earnest did nothing but make themselves, and every body about them, miserable, with fastings, and penances, and other such trash; and those who were not, did nothing but guzzle and royster, and, having no wives of their own, took very unbecoming liberties with those of honester men. And as to your poetry of the twelfth century, it is not good for much.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

It has, at any rate, what ours wants, truth to nature, and simplicity of diction. The poetry, which was addressed to the people of the dark ages, pleased in proportion to the truth with which it depicted familiar images, and to their natural connection with the time and place to which they were assigned. In the poetry of our enlightened times, the characteristics of all seasons, soils, and climates, may be blended together, with much benefit to the author's fame as an original genius. The cowslip of a civic poet is always in blossom, his fern is always in full feather; he gathers the celandine, the primrose, the heath-flower, the jasmine, and the chrysanthemum, all on the same

day, and from the same spot: his nightingale sings all the year round, his moon is always full, his cygnet is as white as his swan, his cedar is as tremulous as his aspen, and his poplar as embowering as his beech. Thus all nature marches with the march of mind; but, among barbarians, instead of mead and wine, and the best seat by the fire, the reward of such a genius would have been, to be summarily turned out of doors in the snow, to meditate on the difference between day and night, and between December and July. It is an age of liberality, indeed, when not to know an oak from a burdock is no disqualification for sylvan minstrelsy. I am for truth and simplicity.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Let him who loves them read Greek: Greek, Greek, Greek.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

If he can, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Very true, sir; if he can. Here is the captain, who can. But I think he must have finished his education at some very rigid college, where a quotation, or any other overt act showing acquaintance with classical literature, was visited with a severe penalty. For my part, I make it my boast that I was not to be so subdued. I could not be abated of a single quotation by all the bumpers in which I was fined.

In this manner they glided over the face of the waters, discussing every thing and settling nothing. Mr. Mac Quedy and the Reverend Doctor Folliott

had many digladiations on political economy: wherein, each in his own view, Doctor Folliott demolished Mr. Mac Quedy's science, and Mr. Mac Quedy demolished Doctor Folliott's objections.

We would print these dialogues if we thought any one would read them: but the world is not yet ripe for this *haute sagesse Pantagrueline*. We must, therefore, content ourselves with an *échantillon* of one of the Reverend Doctor's perorations.

'You have given the name of a science to what is yet an imperfect inquiry; and the upshot of your so-called science is this, that you increase the wealth of a nation by increasing in it the quantity of things which are produced by labour: no matter what they are, no matter how produced, no matter how distributed. The greater the quantity of labour that has gone to the production of the quantity of things in a community, the richer is the community. That is your doctrine. Now, I say, if this be so, riches are not the object for a community to aim at. I say, the nation is best off, in relation to other nations, which has the greatest quantity of the common necessaries of life distributed among the greatest number of persons; which has the greatest number of honest hearts and stout arms united in a common interest, willing to offend no one, but ready to fight in defence of their own community against all the rest of the world, because they have something in it worth fighting for. The moment you admit that one class of things, without any reference to what they respectively cost, is better worth having than another; that a smaller commercial value, with one mode of distribution, is better than a greater commercial value, with another mode of distribu-

tion ; the whole of that curious fabric of postulates and dogmas, which you call the science of political economy, and which I call *politicæ œconomiæ inscientia*, tumbles to pieces.'

Mr. Toogood agreed with Mr. Chainmail against Mr. Mac Quedy, that the existing state of society was worse than that of the twelfth century ; but he agreed with Mr. Mac Quedy against Mr. Chainmail, that it was in progress to something much better than either,—to which 'something much better' Mr. Toogood and Mr. Mac Quedy attached two very different meanings.

Mr. Chainmail fought with Doctor Folliott, the battle of the romantic against the classical in poetry ; and Mr. Skionar contended with Mr. Mac Quedy for intuition and synthesis, against analysis and induction in philosophy.

Mr. Philpot would lie along for hours, listening to the gurgling of the water round the prow, and would occasionally edify the company with speculations on the great changes that would be effected in the world by the steam-navigation of rivers : sketching the course of a steam-boat up and down some mighty stream which civilisation had either never visited, or long since deserted ; the Missouri and the Columbia, the Oroonoko and the Amazon, the Nile and the Niger, the Euphrates and the Tigris, the Oxus and the Indus, the Ganges and the Hoangho ; under the overcanopying forests of the new, or by the long-silent ruins of the ancient, world ; through the shapeless mounds of Babylon, or the gigantic temples of Thebes.

Mr. Trillo went on with the composition of his opera, and took the opinions of the young ladies on every step in its progress ; occasionally regaling

the company with specimens, and wondering at the blindness of Mr. Mac Quedy, who could not, or would not, see that an opera in perfection, being the union of all the beautiful arts,—music, painting, dancing, poetry,—exhibiting female beauty in its most attractive aspects, and in its most becoming costume,—was, according to the well-known precept, *Ingenuas didicisse*, &c., the most efficient instrument of civilisation, and ought to take precedence of all other pursuits in the minds of true philanthropists. The Reverend Doctor Folliott, on these occasions, never failed to say a word or two on Mr. Trillo's side, derived from the practice of the Athenians, and from the combination, in their theatre, of all the beautiful arts, in a degree of perfection unknown to the modern world.

Leaving Lechlade, they entered the canal that connects the Thames with the Severn; ascended by many locks; passed by a tunnel three miles long, through the bowels of Sapperton Hill; agreed unanimously that the greatest pleasure derivable from visiting a cavern of any sort was that of getting out of it; descended by many locks again, through the valley of Stroud into the Severn; continued their navigation into the Ellesmere canal; moored their pinnaces in the Vale of Llangollen by the aqueduct of Pontycysyllty; and determined to pass some days in inspecting the scenery, before commencing their homeward voyage.

The captain omitted no opportunity of pressing his suit on Lady Clarinda, but could never draw from her any reply but the same doctrines of worldly wisdom, delivered in a tone of *badinage*,

mixed with a certain kindness of manner that induced him to hope she was not in earnest.

But the morning after they had anchored under the hills of the Dee,—whether the lady had reflected more seriously than usual, or was somewhat less in good humour than usual, or the Captain was more pressing than usual,—she said to him, 'It must not be, Captain Fitzchrome; "the course of true love never did run smooth:" my father must keep his borough, and I must have a town house and a country house, and an opera box, and a carriage. It is not well for either of us that we should flirt any longer: "I must be cruel only to be kind." Be satisfied with the assurance that you alone, of all men, have ever broken my rest. To be sure, it was only for about three nights in all; but that is too much.'

The captain had *le cœur navré*. He took his portfolio under his arm, made up the little *valise* of a pedestrian, and, without saying a word to any one, wandered off at random among the mountains.

After the lapse of a day or two, the captain was missed, and every one marvelled what was become of him. Mr. Philpot thought he must have been exploring a river, and fallen in and got drowned in the process. Mr. Firedamp had no doubt he had been crossing a mountain bog, and had been suddenly deprived of life by the exhalations of marsh miasmata. Mr. Henbane deemed it probable that he had been tempted in some wood by the large black brilliant berries of the *Atropa Belladonna*, or Deadly Nightshade; and lamented that he had not been by, to administer an infallible antidote. Mr. Eavesdrop hoped the

particulars of his fate would be ascertained; and asked if any one present could help him to any authentic anecdotes of their departed friend. The Reverend Doctor Folliott proposed that an inquiry should be instituted as to whether the march of intellect had reached that neighbourhood; as, if so, the captain had probably been made a subject for science. Mr. Mac Quedy said it was no such great matter to ascertain the precise mode in which the surplus population was diminished by one. Mr. Toogood asseverated that there was no such thing as surplus population, and that the land, properly managed, would maintain twenty times its present inhabitants: and hereupon they fell into a disputation.

Lady Clarinda did not doubt that the captain had gone away designedly: she missed him more than she could have anticipated; and wished she had at least postponed her last piece of cruelty till the completion of their homeward voyage.

CHAPTER XI

CORRESPONDENCE

'Base is the slave that pays.'—Ancient Pistol.

The captain was neither drowned nor poisoned, neither miasmatised nor anatomised. But, before we proceed to account for him, we must look back to a young lady, of whom some little notice was taken in the first chapter; and who, though she has since been out of sight, has never with us been out of mind; Miss Susannah Touchandgo, the forsaken of the junior Crotchet, whom we left an

inmate of a solitary farm, in one of the deep valleys under the cloudcapt summits of Meirion, comforting her wounded spirit with air and exercise, rustic cheer, music, painting, and poetry, and the prattle of the little Ap-Llymry's.

One evening, after an interval of anxious expectation, the farmer, returning from market, brought for her two letters, of which the contents were these :—

'Dotandcarryonetown,
State of Apolidraskiana :
April 1. 18 . .

'My dear Child,

'I am anxious to learn what are your present position, intention, and prospects. The fairies who dropped gold in your shoe, on the morning when I ceased to be a respectable man in London, will soon find a talismanic channel for transmitting you a stocking full of dollars, which will fit the shoe, as well as the foot of Cinderella fitted her slipper. I am happy to say, I am again become a respectable man. It was always my ambition to be a respectable man ; and I am a very respectable man here, in this new township of a new state, where I have purchased five thousand acres of land, at two dollars an acre, hard cash, and established a very flourishing bank. The notes of Touchandgo and Company, soft cash, are now the exclusive currency of all this vicinity. This is the land in which all men flourish ; but there are three classes of men who flourish especially,—Methodist preachers, slave-drivers, and paper-money manufacturers ; and as one of the latter, I have just painted the word Bank on a fine slab of maple, which was green and growing when

I arrived, and have discounted for the settlers, in my own currency, sundry bills, which are to be paid when the proceeds of the crop they have just sown shall return from New Orleans; so that my notes are the representatives of vegetation that is to be, and I am accordingly a capitalist of the first magnitude. The people here know very well that I ran away from London, but the most of them have run away from some place or other; and they have a great respect for me, because they think I ran away with something worth taking, which few of them had the luck or the wit to do. This gives them confidence in my resources, at the same time that, as there is nothing portable in the settlement except my own notes, they have no fear that I shall run away with them. They know I am thoroughly conversant with the principles of banking; and as they have plenty of industry, no lack of sharpness, and abundance of land, they wanted nothing but capital to organise a flourishing settlement; and this capital I have manufactured to the extent required, at the expense of a small importation of pens, ink, and paper, and two or three inimitable copper plates. I have abundance here of all good things, a good conscience included; for I really cannot see that I have done any wrong. This was my position: I owed half a million of money; and I had a trifle in my pocket. It was clear that this trifle could never find its way to the right owner. The question was, whether I should keep it, and live like a gentleman; or hand it over to lawyers and commissioners of bankruptcy, and die like a dog on a dunghill. If I could have thought that the said lawyers, &c., had a better title to it

than myself, I might have hesitated; but, as such title was not apparent to my satisfaction, I decided the question in my own favour; the right owners, as I have already said, being out of the question altogether. I have always taken scientific views of morals and politics, a habit from which I derive much comfort under existing circumstances.

'I hope you adhere to your music, though I cannot hope again to accompany your harp with my flute. My last *andante* movement was too *forte* for those whom it took by surprise. Let not your *allegro vivace* be damped by young Crotchet's desertion, which, though I have not heard it, I take for granted. He is, like myself, a scientific politician, and has an eye as keen as a needle, to his own interest. He has had good luck so far, and is gorgeous in the spoils of many gulls; but I think the Polar Basin and Walrus Company will be too much for him yet. There has been a splendid outlay on credit; and he is the only man, of the original parties concerned, of whom his majesty's sheriffs could give any account.

'I will not ask you to come here. There is no husband for you. The men smoke, drink, and fight, and break more of their own heads than of girls' hearts. Those among them who are musical sing nothing but psalms. They are excellent fellows in their way, but you would not like them.

'*Au reste*, here are no rents, no taxes, no poor-rates, no tithes, no church-establishment, no routs, no clubs, no rotten boroughs, no operas, no concerts, no theatres, no beggars, no thieves, no king, no lords, no ladies, and only one gentleman, videlicet, your loving father,

'TIMOTHY TOUCHANDGO.

'P. S.—I send you one of my notes; I can afford to part with it. If you are accused of receiving money from me, you may pay it over to my assignees. Robthetill continues to be my factotum; I say no more of him in this place: he will give you an account of himself.'

'*Dotandcarryonetown, &c.*

'Dear Miss,

'Mr. Touchandgo will have told you of our arrival here, of our setting up a bank, and so forth. We came here in a tilted waggon, which served us for parlour, kitchen, and all. We soon got up a log-house; and, unluckily, we as soon got it down again, for the first fire we made in it burned down house and all. However, our second experiment was more fortunate; and we are pretty well lodged in a house of three rooms on a floor; I should say the floor, for there is but one.

'This new state is free to hold slaves; all the new states have not this privilege: Mr. Touchandgo has bought some, and they are building him a villa. Mr. Touchandgo is in a thriving way, but he is not happy here: he longs for parties and concerts, and a seat in Congress. He thinks it very hard that he cannot buy one with his own coinage, as he used to do in England. Besides, he is afraid of the Regulators, who, if they do not like a man's character, wait upon him and flog him, doubling the dose at stated intervals, till he takes himself off. He does not like this system of administering justice: though I think he has nothing to fear from it. He has the character of having money, which is the best of all characters here, as at home. He lets his old English pre-

judices influence his opinions of his new neighbours; but I assure you they have many virtues. Though they do keep slaves, they are all ready to fight for their own liberty; and I should not like to be an enemy within reach of one of their rifles. When I say enemy, I include bailiff in the term. One was shot not long ago. There was a trial; the jury gave two dollars damages; the judge said they must find guilty or not guilty; but the counsel for the defendant (they would not call him prisoner), offered to fight the judge upon the point: and as this was said literally, not metaphorically, and the counsel was a stout fellow, the judge gave in. The two dollars damages were not paid after all; for the defendant challenged the foreman to box for double or quits, and the foreman was beaten. The folks in New York made a great outcry about it, but here it was considered all as it should be. So you see, Miss, justice, liberty, and every thing else of that kind, are different in different places, just as suits the convenience of those who have the sword in their own hands. Hoping to hear of your health and happiness, I remain,

'Dear Miss, your dutiful servant,
'RODERICK ROBTHETILL.'

Miss Touchandgo replied as follows, to the first of these letters:—

'MY DEAR FATHER,

'I am sure you have the best of hearts, and I have no doubt you have acted with the best intentions. My lover, or I should rather say, my fortune's lover, has indeed forsaken me. I cannot say I did not feel it; indeed, I cried very much;

and the altered looks of people who used to be so delighted to see me, really annoyed me so that I determined to change the scene altogether. I have come into Wales, and am boarding with a farmer and his wife. Their stock of English is very small, but I managed to agree with them; and they have four of the sweetest children I ever saw, to whom I teach all I know, and I manage to pick up some Welsh. I have puzzled out a little song, which I think very pretty; I have translated it into English, and I send it you, with the original air. You shall play it on your flute at eight o'clock every Saturday evening, and I will play and sing it at the same time, and I will fancy that I hear my dear papa accompanying me.

'The people in London said very unkind things of you: they hurt me very much at the time; but now I am out of their way, I do not seem to think their opinion of much consequence. I am sure, when I recollect, at leisure, every thing I have seen and heard among them, I cannot make out what they do that is so virtuous as to set them up for judges of morals. And I am sure they never speak the truth about any thing, and there is no sincerity in either their love or their friendship. An old Welsh bard here, who wears a waistcoat embroidered with leeks, and is called the Green Bard of Cadair Idris, says the Scotch would be the best people in the world if there was nobody but themselves to give them a character; and so, I think, would the Londoners. I hate the very thought of them, for I do believe they would have broken my heart if I had not got out of their way. Now I shall write you another letter very soon, and describe to you the country, and the people,

and the children, and how I amuse myself, and every thing that I think you will like to hear about: and when I seal this letter, I shall drop a kiss on the cover.

'Your loving daughter,
'SUSANNAH TOUCHANDGO.

'P. S.—Tell Mr. Robthetill I will write to him in a day or two. This is the little song I spoke of:—

'Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
My heart is gone, far, far from me;
And ever on its track will flee
My thoughts, my dreams, beyond the sea.

'Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
The swallow wanders fast and free:
Oh, happy bird! were I like thee,
I, too, would fly beyond the sea.

'Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
Are kindly hearts and social glee:
But here for me they may not be;
My heart is gone beyond the sea.'

CHAPTER XII

THE MOUNTAIN INN

Ὡς ἡδὺ τῷ μισοῦντι τοὺς φαύλους τρόπους
Ἐρημία.

How sweet to minds that love not sordid ways
Is solitude!—MENANDER.

THE captain wandered despondingly up and down hill for several days, passing many hours of each in sitting on rocks; making, almost mechanically, sketches of waterfalls, and mountain pools; taking care, nevertheless, to be always before night-fall in a comfortable inn, where, being

a temperate man, he wiled away the evening with making a bottle of sherry into negus. His rambles brought him at length into the interior of Merionethshire, the land of all that is beautiful in nature, and all that is lovely in woman.

Here, in a secluded village, he found a little inn, of small pretension and much comfort. He felt so satisfied with his quarters, and discovered every day so much variety in the scenes of the surrounding mountains, that his inclination to proceed farther diminished progressively.

It is one thing to follow the high road through a country, with every principally remarkable object carefully noted down in a book, taking, as therein directed, a guide, at particular points, to the more recondite sights: it is another to sit down on one chosen spot, especially when the choice is unpremeditated, and from thence, by a series of explorations, to come day by day on unanticipated scenes. The latter process has many advantages over the former; it is free from the disappointment which attends excited expectation, when imagination has outstripped reality, and from the accidents that mar the scheme of the tourist's single day, when the valleys may be drenched with rain, or the mountains shrouded with mist.

The captain was one morning preparing to sally forth on his usual exploration, when he heard a voice without, inquiring for a guide to the ruined castle. The voice seemed familiar to him, and going forth into the gateway, he recognised Mr. Chainmail. After greetings and inquiries for the absent, 'You vanished very abruptly, captain,' said Mr. Chainmail, 'from our party on the canal.'

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

To tell you the truth, I had a particular reason for trying the effect of absence from a part of that party.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I surmised as much: at the same time, the unusual melancholy of an in general most vivacious young lady made me wonder at your having acted so precipitately. The lady's heart is yours, if there be truth in signs.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Hearts are not now what they were in the days of the old song, 'Will love be controlled by advice?'

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Very true; hearts, heads, and arms have all degenerated, most sadly. We can no more feel the high impassioned love of the ages, which some people have the impudence to call dark, than we can wield King Richard's battleaxe, bend Robin Hood's bow, or flourish the oaken graff of the Pinder of Wakefield. Still we have our tastes and feelings, though they deserve not the name of passions; and some of us may pluck up spirit to try to carry a point, when we reflect that we have to contend with men no better than ourselves.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

We do not now break lances for ladies.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, nor even bulrushes. We jingle purses for them, flourish paper-money banners, and tilt with scrolls of parchment.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

In which sort of tilting I have been thrown from the saddle. I presume it was not love that led you from the flotilla.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

By no means. I was tempted by the sight of an old tower, not to leave this land of ruined castles, without having collected a few hints for the adornment of my baronial hall.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I understand you live *en famille* with your domestics. You will have more difficulty in finding a lady who would adopt your fashion of living, than one who would prefer you to a richer man.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Very true. I have tried the experiment on several as guests; but once was enough for them: so, I suppose, I shall die a bachelor.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

I see, like some others of my friends, you will give up any thing except your hobby.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I will give up anything but my baronial hall.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

You will never find a wife for your purpose, unless in the daughter of some old-fashioned farmer.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, I thank you. I must have a lady of gentle blood; I shall not marry below my own con-

dition: I am too much of a herald; I have too much of the twelfth century in me for that.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Why then your chance is not much better than mine. A well-born beauty would scarcely be better pleased with your baronial hall, than with my more humble offer of love in a cottage. She must have a town-house, and an opera-box, and roll about the streets in a carriage; especially if her father has a rotten borough, for the sake of which he sells his daughter, that he may continue to sell his country. But you were inquiring for a guide to the ruined castle in this vicinity; I know the way, and will conduct you.

The proposal pleased Mr. Chainmail, and they set forth on their expedition.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAKE.—THE RUIN

Or vieni, Amore, e quà meco t'assetta.
ORLANDO INNAMORATO.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

WOULD it not be a fine thing, captain,—you being picturesque, and I poetical; you being for the lights and shadows of the present, and I for those of the past,—if we were to go together over the ground which was travelled in the twelfth century by Giraldus de Barri, when he accompanied Archbishop Baldwin to preach the crusade?

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Nothing, in my present frame of mind, could be more agreeable to me.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

We would provide ourselves with his *Itinerarium;* compare what has been with what is; contemplate in their decay the castles and abbeys which he saw in their strength and splendour; and, while you were sketching their remains, I would dispassionately inquire what has been gained by the change.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Be it so.

But the scheme was no sooner arranged than the captain was summoned to London by a letter on business, which he did not expect to detain him long. Mr. Chainmail, who, like the captain, was fascinated with the inn and the scenery, determined to await his companion's return; and, having furnished him with a list of books, which he was to bring with him from London, took leave of him, and began to pass his days like the heroes of Ariosto, who

> —— tutto il giorno, al bel oprar intenti,
> Saliron balze, e traversar torrenti.

One day Mr. Chainmail traced upwards the course of a mountain-stream, to a spot where a small waterfall threw itself over a slab of perpendicular rock, which seemed to bar his farther progress. On a nearer view, he discovered a flight of steps, roughly hewn in the rock, on one side of the fall. Ascending these steps, he entered a narrow winding pass, between high and naked rocks, that afforded only space for a rough footpath carved on one side, at some height above the torrent.

The pass opened on a lake, from which the

stream issued, and which lay like a dark mirror, set in a gigantic frame of mountain precipices. Fragments of rock lay scattered on the edge of the lake, some half-buried in the water: Mr. Chainmail scrambled some way over these fragments, till the base of a rock, sinking abruptly in the water, effectually barred his progress. He sat down on a large smooth stone; the faint murmur of the stream he had quitted, the occasional flapping of the wings of the heron, and at long intervals the solitary springing of a trout, were the only sounds that came to his ear. The sun shone brightly half-way down the opposite rocks, presenting, on their irregular faces, strong masses of light and shade. Suddenly he heard the dash of a paddle, and, turning his eyes, saw a solitary and beautiful girl gliding over the lake in a coracle; she was proceeding from the vicinity of the point he had quitted towards the upper end of the lake. Her apparel was rustic, but there was in its style something more *recherché*, in its arrangement something more of elegance and precision, than was common to the mountain peasant girl. It had more of the *contadina* of the opera than of the genuine mountaineer; so at least thought Mr. Chainmail; but she passed so rapidly, and took him so much by surprise, that he had little opportunity for accurate observation. He saw her land, at the farther extremity, and disappear among the rocks: he rose from his seat, returned to the mouth of the pass, stepped from stone to stone across the stream, and attempted to pass round by the other side of the lake; but there again the abruptly sinking precipice closed his way.

Day after day he haunted the spot, but never

saw again either the damsel or the coracle. At length, marvelling at himself for being so solicitous about the apparition of a peasant girl in a coracle, who could not, by any possibility, be any thing to him, he resumed his explorations in another direction.

One day he wandered to the ruined castle, on the sea-shore, which was not very distant from his inn; and sitting on the rock, near the base of the ruin, was calling up the forms of past ages on the wall of an ivied tower, when on its summit appeared a female figure, whom he recognised in an instant for his nymph of the coracle. The folds of the blue gown pressed by the sea breeze against one of the most symmetrical of figures, the black feather of the black hat, and the ringleted hair beneath it fluttering in the wind; the apparent peril of her position, on the edge of the mouldering wall, from whose immediate base the rock went down perpendicularly to the sea, presented a singularly interesting combination to the eye of the young antiquary.

Mr. Chainmail had to pass half round the castle, on the land side, before he could reach the entrance: he coasted the dry and bramble-grown moat, crossed the unguarded bridge, passed the unportcullised arch of the gateway, entered the castle court, ascertained the tower, ascended the broken stairs, and stood on the ivied wall. But the nymph of the place was gone. He searched the ruins within and without, but he found not what he sought: he haunted the castle day after day, as he had done the lake, but the damsel appeared no more.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DINGLE

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her, and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,
Shall pass into her face.—WORDSWORTH.

Miss Susannah Touchandgo had read the four great poets of Italy, and many of the best writers of France. About the time of her father's downfall, accident threw into her way *Les Réveries du Promeneur Solitaire:* and from the impression which these made on her, she carried with her into retirement all the works of Rousseau. In the midst of that startling light which the conduct of old friends on a sudden reverse of fortune throws on a young and inexperienced mind, the doctrines of the philosopher of Geneva struck with double force upon her sympathies: she imbibed the sweet poison, as somebody calls it, of his writings, even to a love of truth; which, every wise man knows, ought to be left to those who can get any thing by it. The society of children, the beauties of nature, the solitude of the mountains, became her consolation, and, by degrees, her delight. The gay society from which she had been excluded remained on her memory only as a disagreeable dream. She imbibed her new monitor's ideas of simplicity of dress, assimilating her own with that of the peasant girls in the neighbourhood; the black hat, the blue gown, the black stockings, the shoes tied on the instep.

Pride was, perhaps, at the bottom of the change; she was willing to impose in some measure on herself, by marking a contemptuous indifference to the characteristics of the class of society from which she had fallen,

> 'And with the food of pride sustained her soul
> In solitude.'

It is true that she somewhat modified the forms of her rustic dress: to the black hat she added a black feather, to the blue gown she added a tippet, and a waistband fastened in front with a silver buckle; she wore her black stockings very smooth and tight on her ancles, and tied her shoes in tasteful bows, with the nicest possible ribbon. In this apparel, to which, in winter, she added a scarlet cloak, she made dreadful havoc among the rustic mountaineers, many of whom proposed to 'keep company' with her in the Cambrian fashion, an honour which, to their great surprise, she always declined. Among these, Harry Ap-Heather, whose father rented an extensive sheepwalk, and had a thousand she-lambs wandering in the mountains, was the most strenuous in his suit, and the most pathetic in his lamentations for her cruelty.

Miss Susannah often wandered among the mountains alone, even to some distance from the farm-house. Sometimes she descended into the bottom of the dingles, to the black rocky beds of the torrents, and dreamed away hours at the feet of the cataracts. One spot in particular, from which she had at first shrunk with terror, became by degrees her favourite haunt. A path turning and returning at acute angles, led down a steep wood-covered slope to the edge of a chasm, where

a pool, or resting-place of a torrent, lay far below. A cataract fell in a single sheet into the pool; the pool boiled and bubbled at the base of the fall, but through the greater part of its extent lay calm, deep, and black, as if the cataract had plunged through it to an unimaginable depth without disturbing its eternal repose. At the opposite extremity of the pool, the rocks almost met at their summits, the trees of the opposite banks intermingled their leaves, and another cataract plunged from the pool into a chasm on which the sunbeams never gleamed. High above, on both sides, the steep woody slopes of the dingle soared into the sky; and from a fissure in the rock, on which the little path terminated, a single gnarled and twisted oak stretched itself over the pool, forming a fork with its boughs at a short distance from the rock. Miss Susannah often sat on the rock, with her feet resting on this tree: in time, she made her seat on the tree itself, with her feet hanging over the abyss; and at length she accustomed herself to lie along upon its trunk, with her side on the mossy boll of the fork, and an arm round one of the branches. From this position a portion of the sky and the woods was reflected in the pool, which, from its bank, was but a mass of darkness. The first time she reclined in this manner, her heart beat audibly; in time, she lay down as calmly as on the mountain heather: the perception of the sublime was probably heightened by an intermingled sense of danger; and perhaps that indifference to life, which early disappointment forces upon sensitive minds, was necessary to the first experiment. There was, in the novelty and strangeness of the position, an excite-

ment which never wholly passed away, but which became gradually subordinate to the influence, at once tranquillising and elevating, of the mingled eternity of motion, sound, and solitude.

One sultry noon, she descended into this retreat with a mind more than usually disturbed by reflections on the past. She lay in her favourite position, sometimes gazing on the cataract; looking sometimes up the steep sylvan acclivities into the narrow space of the cloudless ether; sometimes down into the abyss of the pool, and the deep bright-blue reflections that opened another immensity below her. The distressing recollections of the morning, the world, and all its littlenesses, faded from her thoughts like a dream; but her wounded and wearied spirit drank in too deeply the tranquillising power of the place, and she dropped asleep upon the tree like a ship-boy on the mast.

At this moment Mr. Chainmail emerged into daylight, on a projection of the opposite rock, having struck down through the woods in search of unsophisticated scenery. The scene he discovered filled him with delight: he seated himself on the rock, and fell into one of his romantic reveries; when suddenly the semblance of a black hat and feather caught his eye among the foliage of the projecting oak. He started up, shifted his position, and got a glimpse of a blue gown. It was his lady of the lake, his enchantress of the ruined castle, divided from him by a barrier, which, at a few yards below, he could almost overleap, yet unapproachable but by a circuit perhaps of many hours. He watched with intense anxiety. To listen if she breathed was out of the question:

the noses of a dean and chapter would have been soundless in the roar of the torrent. From her extreme stillness, she appeared to sleep: yet what creature, not desperate, would go wilfully to sleep in such a place? Was she asleep then? Nay, was she alive? She was as motionless as death. Had she been murdered, thrown from above, and caught in the tree? She lay too regularly and too composedly for such a supposition. She was asleep then, and in all probability her waking would be fatal. He shifted his position. Below the pool two beetle-browed rocks nearly overarched the chasm, leaving just such a space at the summit as was within the possibility of a leap; the torrent roared below in a fearful gulf. He paused some time on the brink, measuring the practicability and the danger, and casting every now and then an anxious glance to his sleeping beauty. In one of these glances he saw a slight movement of the blue gown, and, in a moment after, the black hat and feather dropped into the pool. Reflection was lost for a moment, and, by a sudden impulse, he bounded over the chasm.

He stood above the projecting oak; the unknown beauty lay like the nymph of the scene; her long black hair, which the fall of her hat had disengaged from its fastenings, drooping through the boughs: he saw that the first thing to be done was to prevent her throwing her feet off the trunk, in the first movements of waking. He sat down on the rock, and placed his feet on the stem, securing her ancles between his own: one of her arms was round a branch of the fork, the other lay loosely on her side. The hand of this arm he endeavoured to reach, by leaning forward from

his seat; he approximated, but could not touch it: after several tantalising efforts, he gave up the point in despair. He did not attempt to wake her, because he feared it might have bad consequences, and he resigned himself to expect the moment of her natural waking, determined not to stir from his post, if she should sleep till midnight.

In this period of forced inaction, he could contemplate at leisure the features and form of his charmer. She was not one of the slender beauties of romance; she was as plump as a partridge; her cheeks were two roses, not absolutely damask, yet verging thereupon; her lips twin-cherries, of equal size; her nose regular, and almost Grecian; her forehead high, and delicately fair; her eyebrows symmetrically arched; her eyelashes long, black, and silky, fitly corresponding with the beautiful tresses that hung among the leaves of the oak, like clusters of wandering grapes.[1] Her eyes were yet to be seen; but how could he doubt that their opening would be the rising of the sun, when all that surrounded their fringy portals was radiant as 'the forehead of the morning sky'?

[1] Ἀλήμονα βότρυν ἐθείρας.—NONNUS

CHAPTER XV

THE FARM

Da ydyw'r gwaith, rhaid d'we'yd y gwir,
Ar fryniau Sîr Meirionydd ;
Golwg oer o'r gwaela gawn
Mae hi etto yn llawn llawenydd.

Though Meirion's rocks, and hills of heath
Repel the distant sight,
Yet where, than those bleak hills beneath
Is found more true delight ?

At length the young lady awoke. She was startled at the sudden sight of the stranger, and somewhat terrified at the first perception of her position. But she soon recovered her self-possession, and, extending her hand to the offered hand of Mr. Chainmail, she raised herself up on the tree, and stepped on the rocky bank.

Mr. Chainmail solicited permission to attend her to her home, which the young lady graciously conceded. They emerged from the woody dingle, traversed an open heath, wound along a mountain road by the shore of a lake, descended to the deep bed of another stream, crossed it by a series of stepping-stones, ascended to some height on the opposite side, and followed upwards the line of the stream, till the banks opened into a spacious amphitheatre, where stood, in its fields and meadows, the farm-house of Ap-Llymry.

During this walk, they had kept up a pretty animated conversation. The lady had lost her hat ; and, as she turned towards Mr. Chainmail, in speaking to him, there was no envious projection of brim to intercept the beams of those radiant

eyes he had been so anxious to see unclosed. There was in them a mixture of softness and brilliancy, the perfection of the beauty of female eyes, such as some men have passed through life without seeing, and such as no man ever saw, in any pair of eyes, but once; such as can never be seen and forgotten. Young Crotchet had seen it; he had not forgotten it; but he had trampled on its memory, as the renegade tramples on the emblems of a faith which his interest only, and not his heart or his reason, has rejected.

Her hair streamed over her shoulders; the loss of the black feather had left nothing but the rustic costume, the blue gown, the black stockings, and the ribbon-tied shoes. Her voice had that full soft volume of melody which gives to common speech the fascination of music. Mr. Chainmail could not reconcile the dress of the damsel with her conversation and manners. He threw out a remote question or two, with the hope of solving the riddle; but, receiving no reply, he became satisfied that she was not disposed to be communicative respecting herself, and, fearing to offend her, fell upon other topics. They talked of the scenes of the mountains, of the dingle, the ruined castle, the solitary lake. She told him that lake lay under the mountains behind her home, and the coracle and the pass at the extremity saved a long circuit to the nearest village, whither she sometimes went to inquire for letters.

Mr. Chainmail felt curious to know from whom these letters might be; and he again threw out two or three fishing questions, to which, as before, he obtained no answer.

The only living biped they met in their walk was

the unfortunate Harry Ap-Heather, with whom they fell in by the stepping-stones, who, seeing the girl of his heart hanging on another man's arm, and, concluding at once that they were 'keeping company,' fixed on her a mingled look of surprise, reproach, and tribulation; and, unable to control his feelings under the sudden shock, burst into a flood of tears, and blubbered till the rocks re-echoed.

They left him mingling his tears with the stream, and his lamentations with its murmurs. Mr. Chainmail inquired who that strange creature might be, and what was the matter with him. The young lady answered, that he was a very worthy young man, to whom she had been the innocent cause of much unhappiness.

'I pity him sincerely,' said Mr. Chainmail; and, nevertheless, he could scarcely restrain his laughter at the exceedingly original figure which the unfortunate rustic lover had presented by the stepping-stones.

The children ran out to meet their dear Miss Susan, jumped all round her, and asked what was become of her hat. Ap-Llymry came out in great haste, and invited Mr. Chainmail to walk in and dine: Mr. Chainmail did not wait to be asked twice. In a few minutes the whole party, Miss Susan and Mr. Chainmail, Mr. and Mrs. Ap-Llymry, and progeny, were seated over a clean homespun tablecloth, ornamented with fowls and bacon, a pyramid of potatoes, another of cabbage, which Ap-Llymry said 'was poiled with the pacon, and as coot as marrow,' a bowl of milk for the children, and an immense brown jug of foaming ale, with which Ap-Llymry seemed to delight in filling the horn of his new guest.

Shall we describe the spacious apartment, which was at once kitchen, hall, and dining-room,—the large dark rafters, the pendent bacon and onions, the strong old oaken furniture, the bright and trimly arranged utensils? Shall we describe the cut of Ap-Llymry's coat, the colour and tie of his neckcloth, the number of buttons at his knees,—the structure of Mrs. Ap-Llymry's cap, having lappets over the ears, which were united under the chin, setting forth especially whether the bond of union were a pin or a ribbon? We shall leave this tempting field of interesting expatiation to those whose brains are high-pressure steam-engines for spinning prose by the furlong, to be trumpeted in paid-for paragraphs in the quack's corner of newspapers: modern literature having attained the honourable distinction of sharing with blacking and Macassar oil, the space which used to be monopolized by razor-strops and the lottery; whereby that very enlightened community, the reading public, is tricked into the perusal of much exemplary nonsense; though the few who see through the trickery have no reason to complain, since as 'good wine needs no bush,' so, *ex vi oppositi*, these bushes of venal panegyric point out very clearly that the things they celebrate are not worth reading.

The party dined very comfortably in a corner most remote from the fire; and Mr. Chainmail very soon found his head swimming with two or three horns of ale, of a potency to which even he was unaccustomed. After dinner, Ap-Llymry made him finish a bottle of mead, which he willingly accepted, both as an excuse to remain, and as a drink of the dark ages, which he had no

doubt was a genuine brewage, from uncorrupted tradition.

In the meantime, as soon as the cloth was removed, the children had brought out Miss Susannah's harp. She began, without affectation, to play and sing to the children, as was her custom of an afternoon, first in their own language, and their national melodies, then in English: but she was soon interrupted by a general call of little voices for 'Ouf! di giorno.' She complied with the request, and sang the ballad from Paër's Camilla: *Un dì carco il mulinaro*.[1] The children were very familiar with every syllable of this ballad, which had been often fully explained to them. They danced in a circle with the burden of every verse, shouting out the chorus with good articulation and joyous energy; and at the end of the second stanza, where the traveller has his nose pinched by his grandmother's ghost, every nose in the party was nipped by a pair of little fingers. Mr. Chainmail, who was not prepared for the process, came in for a very energetic tweak, from a chubby girl that sprang suddenly on his knees for the purpose, and made the roof ring with her laughter.

[1] In this ballad, the terrors of the Black Forest are narrated to an assemblage of domestics and peasants, who, at the end of every stanza, dance in a circle round the narrator. The second stanza is as follows:

Una notte in un stradotto
Un incauto s'inoltrò;
E uno strillo udì di botto
Che l'orecchio gl'intronò:—
Era l'ombra di sua nonna,
Che pel naso lo pigliò.
Ouf! di giorno nè di sera,
Non passiam la selva nera.—(*Ballano in Giro.*)

So passed the time till evening, when Mr. Chainmail moved to depart. But it turned out on inquiry that he was some miles from his inn, that the way was intricate, and that he must not make any difficulty about accepting the farmer's hospitality till morning. The evening set in with rain; the fire was found agreeable; they drew around it. The young lady made tea; and afterwards, from time to time, at Mr. Chainmail's special request, delighted his ear with passages of ancient music. Then came a supper of lake trout, fried on the spot, and thrown, smoking hot, from the pan to the plate. Then came a brewage, which the farmer called his nightcap, of which he insisted on Mr. Chainmail's taking his full share. After which the gentleman remembered nothing, till he awoke, the next morning, to the pleasant consciousness that he was under the same roof with one of the most fascinating creatures under the canopy of heaven.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NEWSPAPER

Ποίας δ' ἀποσπασθεῖσα φύτλας
Ὀρέων κευθμῶνας ἔχει σκιοέντων;

Sprung from what line, adorns the maid
These valleys deep in mountain shade?
PIND. *Pyth.* IX.

MR. CHAINMAIL forgot the captain and the route of Giraldus de Barri. He became suddenly satisfied that the ruined castle in his present neighbourhood was the best possible specimen of its class, and that it was needless to carry his researches further.

He visited the farm daily: found himself always welcome; flattered himself that the young lady saw him with pleasure, and dragged a heavier chain at every new parting from Miss Susan, as the children called his nymph of the mountains. What might be her second name, he had vainly endeavoured to discover.

Mr. Chainmail was in love; but the determination he had long before formed and fixed in his mind, to marry only a lady of gentle blood, without a blot in her escutcheon, repressed the declarations of passion which were often rising to his lips. In the meantime, he left no means untried, to pluck out the heart of her mystery.

The young lady soon divined his passion, and penetrated his prejudices. She began to look on him with favourable eyes; but she feared her name and parentage would present an insuperable barrier to his feudal pride.

Things were in this state when the captain returned, and unpacked his maps and books in the parlour of the inn.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Really, captain, I find so many objects of attraction in this neighbourhood, that I would gladly postpone our purpose.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Undoubtedly, this neighbourhood has many attractions; but there is something very inviting in the scheme you laid down.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No doubt, there is something very tempting in the route of Giraldus de Barri. But there are better

things in this vicinity even than that. To tell you the truth, captain, I have fallen in love.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

What! while I have been away?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Even so.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

The plunge must have been very sudden, if you are already over head and ears.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

As deep as Llyn-y-dreiddiad-vrawd.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

And what may that be?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

A pool not far off: a resting-place of a mountain stream, which is said to have no bottom. There is a tradition connected with it; and here is a ballad on it, at your service:—

LLYN-Y-DREIDDIAD-VRAWD

THE POOL OF THE DIVING FRIAR

Gwenwynwyn withdrew from the feasts of his hall;
He slept very little, he prayed not at all;
He pondered, and wandered, and studied alone;
And sought, night and day, the philosopher's stone.

He found it at length, and he made its first proof
By turning to gold all the lead of his roof:
Then he bought some magnanimous heroes, all fire,
Who lived but to smite and be smitten for hire.

With these, on the plains like a torrent he broke ;
He filled the whole country with flame and with smoke ;
He killed all the swine, and he broached all the wine ;
He drove off the sheep, and the beeves, and the kine ;

He took castles and towns ; he cut short limbs and lives ;
He made orphans and widows of children and wives :
This course many years he triumphantly ran,
And did mischief enough to be called a great man.

When, at last, he had gained all for which he had striven,
He bethought him of buying a passport to heaven ;
Good and great as he was, yet he did not well know
How soon, or which way, his great spirit might go.

He sought the grey friars, who, beside a wild stream,
Refected their frames on a primitive scheme ;
The gravest and wisest Gwenwynwyn found out,
All lonely and ghostly, and angling for trout.

Below the white dash of a mighty cascade,
Where a pool of the stream a deep resting-place made,
And rock-rooted oaks stretched their branches on high,
The friar stood musing, and throwing his fly.

To him said Gwenwynwyn, ' Hold, father, here 's store,
For the good of the church, and the good of the poor ; '
Then he gave him the stone ; but, ere more he could speak,
Wrath came on the friar, so holy and meek :

He had stretched forth his hand to receive the red gold,
And he thought himself mocked by Gwenwynwyn the Bold ;
And in scorn of the gift, and in rage at the giver,
He jerked it immediately into the river.

Gwenwynwyn, aghast, not a syllable spake ;
The philosopher's stone made a duck and a drake :
Two systems of circles a moment were seen,
And the stream smoothed them off, as they never had been.

Gwenwynwyn regained, and uplifted, his voice :
' Oh friar, grey friar, full rash was thy choice ;
The stone, the good stone, which away thou hast thrown,
Was the stone of all stones, the philosopher's stone ! '

The friar looked pale, when his error he knew;
The friar looked red, and the friar looked blue;
And heels over head, from the point of a rock,
He plunged, without stopping to pull off his frock.

He dived very deep, but he dived all in vain,
The prize he had slighted he found not again:
Many times did the friar his diving renew,
And deeper and deeper the river still grew.

Gwenwynwyn gazed long, of his senses in doubt,
To see the grey friar a diver so stout:
Then sadly and slowly his castle he sought,
And left the friar diving, like dabchick distraught.

Gwenwynwyn fell sick with alarm and despite,
Died, and went to the devil, the very same night:
The magnanimous heroes he held in his pay
Sacked his castle, and marched with the plunder away.

No knell on the silence of midnight was rolled,
For the flight of the soul of Gwenwynwyn the Bold:
The brethren, unfeed, let the mighty ghost pass,
Without praying a prayer, or intoning a mass.

The friar haunted ever beside the dark stream;
The philosopher's stone was his thought and his dream:
And day after day, ever head under heels
He dived all the time he could spare from his meals.

He dived, and he dived, to the end of his days,
As the peasants oft witnessed with fear and amaze:
The mad friar's diving-place long was their theme,
And no plummet can fathom that pool of the stream.

And still, when light clouds on the midnight winds ride,
If by moonlight you stray on the lone river-side,
The ghost of the friar may be seen diving there,
With head in the water and heels in the air.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Well, your ballad is very pleasant: you shall

show me the scene, and I will sketch it ; but just now I am more interested about your love. What heroine of the twelfth century has risen from the ruins of the old castle, and looked down on you from the ivied battlements ?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

You are nearer the mark than you suppose. Even from those battlements a heroine of the twelfth century has looked down on me.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Oh ! some vision of an ideal beauty. I suppose the whole will end in another tradition and a ballad.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Genuine flesh and blood ; as genuine as Lady Clarinda. I will tell you the story.

Mr. Chainmail narrated his adventures.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Then you seem to have found what you wished. Chance has thrown in your way what none of the gods would have ventured to promise you.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Yes, but I know nothing of her birth and parentage. She tells me nothing of herself, and I have no right to question her directly.

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

She appears to be expressly destined for the light of your baronial hall. Introduce me : in this case, two heads are better than one.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

No, I thank you. Leave me to manage my

chance of a prize, and keep you to your own chance of a——

CAPTAIN FITZCHROME.

Blank. As you please. Well, I will pitch my tent here, till I have filled my portfolio, and shall be glad of as much of your company as you can spare from more attractive society.

Matters went on pretty smoothly for several days, when an unlucky newspaper threw all into confusion. Mr. Chainmail received newspapers by the post, which came in three times a week. One morning, over their half-finished breakfast, the captain had read half a newspaper very complacently, when suddenly he started up in a frenzy, hurled over the breakfast table, and, bouncing from the apartment, knocked down Harry Ap-Heather, who was coming in at the door to challenge his supposed rival to a boxing-match.

Harry sprang up, in a double rage, and intercepted Mr. Chainmail's pursuit of the captain, placing himself in the doorway, in a pugilistic attitude. Mr. Chainmail, not being disposed for this mode of combat, stepped back into the parlour, took the poker in his right hand, and displacing the loose bottom of a large elbow chair, threw it over his left arm, as a shield. Harry, not liking the aspect of the enemy in this imposing attitude, retreated with backward steps into the kitchen, and tumbled over a cur, which immediately fastened on his rear.

Mr. Chainmail, half-laughing, half-vexed, anxious to overtake the captain, and curious to know what was the matter with him, pocketed the newspaper, and sallied forth, leaving Harry

roaring for a doctor and a tailor, to repair the lacerations of his outward man.

Mr. Chainmail could find no trace of the captain. Indeed, he sought him but in one direction, which was that leading to the farm; where he arrived in due time, and found Miss Susan alone. He laid the newspaper on the table, as was his custom, and proceeded to converse with the young lady: a conversation of many pauses, as much of signs as of words. The young lady took up the paper, and turned it over and over, while she listened to Mr. Chainmail, whom she found every day more and more agreeable, when, suddenly, her eye glanced on something which made her change colour, and dropping the paper on the ground, she rose from her seat, exclaiming, 'Miserable must she be who trusts any of your faithless sex! Never, never, never, will I endure such misery twice.' And she vanished up the stairs. Mr. Chainmail was petrified. At length, he cried aloud, 'Cornelius Agrippa must have laid a spell on this accursed newspaper;' and was turning it over, to look for the source of the mischief, when Mrs. Ap-Llymry made her appearance.

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

What have you done to poor dear Miss Susan? She is crying, ready to break her heart.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

So help me the memory of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, I have not the most distant notion of what is the matter!

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

Oh, don't tell me, sir; you must have ill-used her. I know how it is. You have been keeping

company with her, as if you wanted to marry her; and now, all at once, you have been trying to make her your mistress. I have seen such tricks more than once, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

My dear madam, you wrong me utterly. I have none but the kindest feelings and the most honourable purposes towards her. She has been disturbed by something she has seen in this rascally paper.

MRS. AP-LLYRMY.

Why, then, the best thing you can do is to go away, and come again to-morrow.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Not I, indeed, madam. Out of this house I stir not, till I have seen the young lady, and obtained a full explanation.

MRS. AP-LLYMRY.

I will tell Miss Susan what you say. Perhaps she will come down.

Mr. Chainmail sate with as much patience as he could command, running over the paper, from column to column. At length, he lighted on an announcement of the approaching marriage of Lady Clarinda Bossnowl with Mr. Crotchet the younger. This explained the captain's discomposure, but the cause of Miss Susan's was still to be sought; he could not know that it was one and the same.

Presently the sound of the longed-for step was heard on the stairs; the young lady reappeared, and resumed her seat: her eyes showed that she had been weeping. The gentleman was now

exceedingly puzzled how to begin, but the young lady relieved him by asking, with great simplicity, 'What do you wish to have explained, sir?'

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I wish, if I may be permitted, to explain myself to you. Yet could I first wish to know what it was that disturbed you in this unlucky paper. Happy should I be if I could remove the cause of your inquietude!

MISS SUSANNAH.

The cause is already removed. I saw something that excited painful recollections; nothing that I could now wish otherwise than as it is.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Yet, may I ask why it is that I find one so accomplished living in this obscurity, and passing only by the name of Miss Susan?

MISS SUSANNAH.

The world and my name are not friends. I have left the world, and wish to remain for ever a stranger to all whom I once knew in it.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

You can have done nothing to dishonour your name.

MISS SUSANNAH.

No, sir. My father has done that of which the world disapproves, in matters of which I pretend not to judge. I have suffered for it as I will never suffer again. My name is my own secret; I have no other, and that is one not worth knowing. You see what I am, and all I am. I live according to the

condition of my present fortune; and here, so living, I have found tranquillity.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Yet, I entreat you, tell me your name.

MISS SUSANNAH.

Why, sir?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Why, but to throw my hand, my heart, my fortune, at your feet, if——

MISS SUSANNAH.

If my name be worthy of them.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Nay, nay, not so; if your hand and heart are free.

MISS SUSANNAH.

My hand and heart are free; but they must be sought from myself, and not from my name.

She fixed her eyes on him, with a mingled expression of mistrust, of kindness, and of fixed resolution, which the far-gone *innamorato* found irresistible.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Then from yourself alone I seek them.

MISS SUSANNAH.

Reflect. You have prejudices on the score of parentage. I have not conversed with you so often, without knowing what they are. Choose between them and me. I too have my own prejudices on the score of personal pride.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

I would choose you from all the world, were you even the daughter of the *exécuteur des hautes œuvres*, as the heroine of a romantic story I once read turned out to be.

MISS SUSANNAH.

I am satisfied. You have now a right to know my history; and, if you repent, I absolve you from all obligations.

She told him her history; but he was out of the reach of repentance. 'It is true,' as at a subsequent period he said to the captain, 'she is the daughter of a money-changer; one who, in the days of Richard the First, would have been plucked by the beard in the streets; but she is, according to modern notions, a lady of gentle blood. As to her father's running away, that is a minor consideration: I have always understood, from Mr. Mac Quedy, who is a great oracle in this way, that promises to pay ought not to be kept; the essence of a safe and economical currency being an interminable series of broken promises. There seems to be a difference among the learned as to the way in which the promises ought to be broken; but I am not deep enough in their casuistry to enter into such nice distinctions.'

In a few days there was a wedding, a pathetic leave-taking of the farmer's family, a hundred kisses from the bride to the children, and promises twenty times reclaimed and renewed, to visit them in the ensuing year.

CHAPTER XVII

THE INVITATION

A cup of wine, that 's brisk and fine,
And drink unto the leman mine.
Master Silence.

This veridicous history began in May, and the occurrences already narrated have carried it on to the middle of autumn. Stepping over the interval to Christmas, we find ourselves in our first locality, among the chalk hills of the Thames; and we discover our old friend, Mr. Crotchet, in the act of accepting an invitation, for himself, and any friends who might be with him, to pass their Christmas-day at Chainmail Hall, after the fashion of the twelfth century. Mr. Crotchet had assembled about him, for his own Christmas-festivities, nearly the same party which was introduced to the reader in the spring. Three of that party were wanting. Dr. Morbific, by inoculating himself once too often with non-contagious matter, had explained himself out of the world. Mr. Henbane had also departed, on the wings of an infallible antidote. Mr. Eavesdrop, having printed in a magazine some of the after-dinner conversations of the castle, had had sentence of exclusion passed upon him, on the motion of the Reverend Doctor Folliott, as a flagitious violator of the confidences of private life.

Miss Crotchet had become Lady Bossnowl, but Lady Clarinda had not yet changed her name to Crotchet. She had, on one pretence and another, procrastinated the happy event, and the gentleman had not been very pressing; she had, however

accompanied her brother and sister-in-law, to pass Christmas at Crotchet Castle. With these, Mr. Mac Quedy, Mr. Philpot, Mr. Trillo, Mr. Skionar, Mr. Toogood, and Mr. Firedamp, were sitting at breakfast, when the Reverend Doctor Folliott entered and took his seat at the table.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, Mr. Mac Quedy, it is now some weeks since we have met: how goes on the march of mind?

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Nay, sir; I think you may see that with your own eyes.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, I have seen it, much to my discomfiture. It has marched into my rick-yard, and set my stacks on fire, with chemical materials, most scientifically compounded. It has marched up to the door of my vicarage, a hundred and fifty strong; ordered me to surrender half my tithes; consumed all the provisions I had provided for my audit feast, and drunk up my old October. It has marched in through my back-parlour shutters, and out again with my silver spoons, in the dead of the night. The policeman, who was sent down to examine, says my house has been broken open on the most scientific principles. All this comes of education.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I rather think it comes of poverty.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir. Robbery perhaps comes of poverty, but scientific principles of robbery come of education. I suppose the learned friend has written a

sixpenny treatise on mechanics, and the rascals who robbed me have been reading it.

MR. CROTCHET.

Your house would have been very safe, doctor, if they had had no better science than the learned friend's to work with.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, that may be. Excellent potted char. The Lord deliver me from the learned friend.

MR. CROTCHET.

Well, doctor, for your comfort, here is a declaration of the learned friend's that he will never take office.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then, sir, he will be in office next week. Peace be with him! Sugar and cream.

MR. CROTCHET.

But, doctor, are you for Chainmail Hall on Christmas-day?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That am I, for there will be an excellent dinner, though, peradventure, grotesquely served.

MR. CROTCHET.

I have not seen my neighbour since he left us on the canal.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

He has married a wife, and brought her home.

LADY CLARINDA.

Indeed! If she suits him, she must be an oddity: it will be amusing to see them together.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

Very amusing. He! he!

MR. FIREDAMP.

Is there any water about Chainmail Hall?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

An old moat.

MR. FIREDAMP.

I shall die of *malaria*.

MR. TRILLO.

Shall we have any music?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

An old harper.

MR. TRILLO.

Those fellows are always horridly out of tune. What will he play?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Old songs and marches.

MR. SKIONAR.

Amongst so many old things, I hope we shall find Old Philosophy.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

An old woman.

MR. PHILPOT.

Perhaps an old map of the river in the twelfth century.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No doubt.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

How many more old things?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Old hospitality, old wine, old ale; all the images of old England; an old butler.

MR. TOOGOOD.

Shall we all be welcome?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Heartily; you will be slapped on the shoulder, and called old boy.

LORD BOSSNOWL.

I think we should all go in our old clothes. He! he!

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You will sit on old chairs, round an old table, by the light of old lamps, suspended from pointed arches, which Mr. Chainmail says, first came into use in the twelfth century; with old armour on the pillars, and old banners in the roof.

LADY CLARINDA.

And what curious piece of antiquity is the lady of the mansion?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No antiquity there; none.

LADY CLARINDA.

Who was she?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

That I know not.

LADY CLARINDA.

Have you seen her?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I have.

LADY CLARINDA.

Is she pretty?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

More—beautiful. A subject for the pen of Nonnus, or the pencil of Zeuxis. Features of all loveliness, radiant with all virtue and intelligence. A face for Antigone. A form at once plump and symmetrical, that, if it be decorous to divine it by externals, would have been a model for the Venus of Cnidos. Never was any thing so goodly to look on, the present company excepted, and poor dear Mrs. Folliott. She reads moral philosophy, Mr. Mac Quedy, which indeed she might as well let alone; she reads Italian poetry, Mr. Skionar; she sings Italian music, Mr. Trillo; but, with all this, she has the greatest of female virtues, for she superintends the household, and looks after her husband's dinner. I believe she was a mountaineer: *παρθένος οὐρεσίφοιτος, ἐρήμαδι σύντροφος ὕλῃ*,[1] as Nonnus sweetly sings.

[1] A mountain-wandering maid,
Twin-nourished with the solitary wood.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHAINMAIL HALL

Vous autres dictes que ignorance est mere de tous maulx. et dictes vray : mais toutesfoys vous ne la bannissez mye de vos entendemens, et vivez en elle, avecques elle, et par elle. C'est pourquoy tant de maulx vous meshaignent de jour en jour.—RABELAIS, l. 5. c. 7.

THE party which was assembled on Christmas-day in Chainmail Hall, comprised all the guests of Crotchet Castle, some of Mr. Chainmail's other neighbours, all his tenants and domestics, and Captain Fitzchrome. The hall was spacious and lofty ; and with its tall fluted pillars and pointed arches, its windows of stained glass, its display of arms and banners intermingled with holly and mistletoe, its blazing cressets and torches, and a stupendous fire in the centre, on which blocks of pine were flaming and crackling, had a striking effect on eyes unaccustomed to such a dining-room. The fire was open on all sides, and the smoke was caught and carried back, under a funnel-formed canopy, into a hollow central pillar. This fire was the line of demarcation between gentle and simple, on days of high festival. Tables extended from it on two sides, to nearly the end of the hall.

Mrs. Chainmail was introduced to the company. Young Crotchet felt some revulsion of feeling at the unexpected sight of one whom he had forsaken, but not forgotten, in a condition apparently so much happier than his own. The lady held out her hand to him with a cordial look of more than forgiveness ; it seemed to say that she had much to thank him for. She was the picture of a happy bride, *rayonnante de joie et d'amour*.

Mr. Crotchet told the Reverend Doctor Folliott the news of the morning. 'As you predicted,' he said, 'your friend, the learned friend, is in office; he has also a title; he is now Sir Guy de Vaux.'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Thank heaven for that! he is disarmed from further mischief. It is something, at any rate, to have that hollow and wind-shaken reed rooted up for ever from the field of public delusion.[1]

[1] I may here insert, as somewhat germane to the matter, some lines which were written by me, in March, 1831, and printed in the *Examiner* of August 14, 1831. They were then called 'An Anticipation:' they may now (1837), be fairly entitled 'A Prophecy fulfilled.'

THE FATE OF A BROOM: AN ANTICIPATION

Lo! in Corruption's lumber-room,
The remnants of a wondrous broom;
That walking, talking, oft was seen,
Making stout promise to sweep clean;
But evermore, at every push,
Proved but a stump without a brush.
Upon its handle-top, a sconce,
Like Brahma's, looked four ways at once.
Pouring on king, lords, church, and rabble,
Long floods of favour-currying gabble;
From four-fold mouth-piece always spinning
Projects of plausible beginning,
Whereof said sconce did ne'er intend
That any one should have an end;
Yet still, by shifts and quaint inventions,
Got credit for its good intentions,
Adding no trifle to the store,
Wherewith the devil paves his floor.
Worn out at last, found bare and scrubbish,
And thrown aside with other rubbish,
We'll e'en hand o'er the enchanted stick,
As a choice present for Old Nick,
To sweep, beyond the Stygian lake,
The pavement it has helped to make.

MR. CROTCHET.

I suppose, doctor, you do not like to see a great reformer in office; you are afraid for your vested interests.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Not I, indeed, sir; my vested interests are very safe from all such reformers as the learned friend. I vaticinate what will be the upshot of all his schemes of reform. He will make a speech of seven hours' duration, and this will be its quintessence: that, seeing the exceeding difficulty of putting salt on the bird's tail, it will be expedient to consider the best method of throwing dust in the bird's eyes. All the rest will be

Τιτιτιτιμπρό.
Ποποποί, ποποποί.
Τιοτιοτιοτιοτιοτιοτίγξ.
Κικκακαῦ, κικκαβαῦ.
τοροτοροτοροτορολιλιλίγξ.[1]

as Aristophanes has it; and so I leave him, in Nephelococcygia.[2]

Mr. Mac Quedy came up to the divine as Mr. Crotchet left him, and said: 'There is one piece of news which the old gentleman has not told you. The great firm of Catchflat and Company, in which young Crotchet is a partner, has stopped payment.'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Bless me! that accounts for the young gentleman's melancholy. I thought they would overreach themselves with their own tricks. The day of reckoning, Mr. Mac Quedy, is the point which

[1] Sounds without meaning; imitative of the voices of birds. From the Ὄρνιθες of Aristophanes.

[2] 'Cuckoo-city in-the-clouds.' From the same comedy.

your paper-money science always leaves out of view.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

I do not see, sir, that the failure of Catchflat and Company has any thing to do with my science.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

It has this to do with it, sir, that you would turn the whole nation into a great paper-money shop, and take no thought of the day of reckoning. But the dinner is coming. I think you, who are so fond of paper promises, should dine on the bill of fare.

The harper at the head of the hall struck up an ancient march, and the dishes were brought in, in grand procession.

The boar's head, garnished with rosemary, with a citron in its mouth, led the van. Then came tureens of plum-porridge; then a series of turkeys, and, in the midst of them, an enormous sausage, which it required two men to carry. Then came geese and capons, tongues and hams, the ancient glory of the Christmas pie, a gigantic plum-pudding, a pyramid of minced pies, and a baron of beef bringing up the rear.

'It is something new under the sun,' said the divine, as he sat down, 'to see a great dinner without fish.'

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Fish was for fasts, in the twelfth century.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Well, sir, I prefer our reformed system of putting fasts and feasts together. Not but here is ample indemnity.

Ale and wine flowed in abundance. The dinner

passed off merrily; the old harper playing all the while the oldest music in his repertory. The tables being cleared, he indemnified himself for lost time at the lower end of the hall, in company with the old butler and the other domestics, whose attendance on the banquet had been indispensable.

The scheme of Christmas gambols, which Mr. Chainmail had laid for the evening, was interrupted by a tremendous clamour without.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

What have we here? Mummers?

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Nay, I know not. I expect none.

'Who is there?' he added, approaching the door of the hall.

'Who is there?' vociferated the divine, with the voice of Stentor.

'Captain Swing,' replied a chorus of discordant voices.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Ho, ho! here is a piece of the dark ages we did not bargain for. Here is the Jacquerie. Here is the march of mind with a witness.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Do you not see that you have brought disparates together? the Jacquerie and the march of mind.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Not at all, sir. They are the same thing, under different names. Πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφὴ μία.[1] What was Jacquerie in the dark ages, is the march

[1] 'One shape of many names.'
ÆSCHYLUS: *Prometheus.*

of mind in this very enlightened one—very enlightened one.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

The cause is the same in both; poverty in despair.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Very likely; but the effect is extremely disagreeable.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

It is the natural result, Mr. Mac Quedy, of that system of state seamanship which your science upholds. Putting the crew on short allowance, and doubling the rations of the officers, is the sure way to make a mutiny on board a ship in distress, Mr. Mac Quedy.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh! sir, I uphold no such system as that. I shall set you right as to cause and effect. Discontent increases with the increase of information.[1] That is all.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I said it was the march of mind. But we have not time for discussing cause and effect now. Let us get rid of the enemy.

And he vociferated at the top of his voice, 'What do you want here?'

'Arms, arms,' replied a hundred voices, 'Give us the arms.'

[1] This looks so like caricature (a thing abhorrent to our candour), that we must give authority for it. 'We ought to look the evil manfully in the face, and not amuse ourselves with the dreams of fancy. The discontent of the labourers in our times is rather a proof of their superior information than of their deterioration.'—*Morning Chronicle: December* 20. 1830.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

You see, Mr. Chainmail, this is the inconvenience of keeping an armoury, not fortified with sand bags, green bags, and old bags of all kinds.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Just give them the old spits and toasting irons, and they will go away quietly.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

My spears and swords! not without my life. These assailants are all aliens to my land and house. My men will fight for me, one and all. This is the fortress of beef and ale.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh! sir, when the rabble is up, it is very indiscriminating. You are e'en suffering for the sins of Sir Simon Steeltrap, and the like, who have pushed the principle of accumulation a little too far.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

The way to keep the people down is kind and liberal usage.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

That is very well (where it can be afforded), in the way of prevention; but in the way of cure, the operation must be more drastic. (*Taking down a battle-axe*). I would fain have a good blunderbuss charged with slugs.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

When I suspended these arms for ornament, I never dreamed of their being called into use.

MR. SKIONAR.

Let me address them. I never failed to convince an audience that the best thing they could do was to go away.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Eh! sir, I can bring them to that conclusion in less time than you.

MR. CROTCHET.

I have no fancy for fighting. It is a very hard case upon a guest, when the latter end of a feast is the beginning of a fray.

MR. MAC QUEDY.

Give them the old iron.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Give them the weapons! *Pessimo, medius fidius, exemplo.*[1] Forbid it the spirit of *Frère Jean des Entommeures!* No! let us see what the church militant, in the armour of the twelfth century, will do against the march of mind. Follow me who will, and stay who list. Here goes: *Pro aris et focis!* that is, for tithe pigs and fires to roast them!

He clapped a helmet on his head, seized a long lance, threw open the gates, and tilted out on the rabble, side by side with Mr. Chainmail, followed by the greater portion of the male inmates of the hall, who had armed themselves at random.

The rabble-rout, being unprepared for such a sortie, fled in all directions, over hedge and ditch.

Mr. Trillo stayed in the hall, playing a march on the harp, to inspirit the rest to sally out. The

[1] A most pernicious example, by Hercules!—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

water-loving Mr. Philpot had diluted himself with so much wine, as to be quite *hors de combat*. Mr. Toogood, intending to equip himself in purely defensive armour, contrived to slip a ponderous coat of mail over his shoulders, which pinioned his arms to his sides; and in this condition, like a chicken trussed for roasting, he was thrown down behind a pillar, in the first rush of the sortie. Mr. Crotchet seized the occurrence as a pretext for staying with him, and passed the whole time of the action in picking him out of his shell.

'Phew!' said the divine, returning; 'an inglorious victory: but it deserves a devil and a bowl of punch.'

MR. CHAINMAIL.

A wassail-bowl.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No, sir. No more of the twelfth century for me.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Nay, doctor. The twelfth century has backed you well. Its manners and habits, its community of kind feelings between master and man, are the true remedy for these ebullitions.

MR. TOOGOOD.

Something like it: improved by my diagram: arts for arms.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

No wassail-bowl for me. Give me an unsophisticated bowl of punch, which belongs to that blissful middle period, after the Jacquerie was down, and before the march of mind was up. But, see, who is floundering in the water?

Proceeding to the hedge of the moat, they fished up Mr. Firedamp, who had missed his way back, and tumbled in. He was drawn out, exclaiming, 'that he had taken his last dose of *malaria* in this world.'

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Tut, man; dry clothes, a turkey's leg and rump, well devilled, and a quart of strong punch, will set all to rights.

'Wood embers,' said Mr. Firedamp, when he had been accommodated with a change of clothes, 'there is no antidote to *malaria* like the smoke of wood embers; pine embers.' And he placed himself, with his mouth open, close by the fire.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Punch, sir, punch: there is no antidote like punch.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

Well, doctor, you shall be indulged. But I shall have my wassail-bowl nevertheless.

An immense bowl of spiced wine, with roasted apples hissing on its surface, was borne into the hall by four men, followed by an empty bowl of the same dimensions, with all the materials of arrack punch, for the divine's especial brewage. He accinged himself to the task, with his usual heroism; and having finished it to his entire satisfaction, reminded his host to order in the devil.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I think, Mr. Chainmail, we can amuse ourselves very well here all night. The enemy may be still excubant: and we had better not disperse till daylight. I am perfectly satisfied with my

quarters. Let the young folks go on with their gambols; let them dance to your old harper's minstrelsy; and if they please to kiss under the mistletoe, whereof I espy a goodly bunch suspended at the end of the hall, let those who like it not, leave it to those who do. Moreover, if among the more sedate portion of the assembly, which, I foresee, will keep me company, there were any to revive the good old custom of singing after supper, so to fill up the intervals of the dances, the steps of night would move more lightly.

MR. CHAINMAIL.

My Susan will set the example, after she has set that of joining in the rustic dance, according to good customs long departed.

After the first dance, in which all classes of the company mingled, the young lady of the mansion took her harp, and following the reverend gentleman's suggestion, sang a song of the twelfth century.

FLORENCE AND BLANCHFLOR [1]

Florence and Blanchflor, loveliest maids,
Within a summer grove,
Amid the flower-enamelled shades
Together talked of love.

A clerk sweet Blanchflor's heart had gained;
Fair Florence loved a knight:
And each with ardent voice maintained,
She loved the worthiest wight.

Sweet Blanchflor praised her scholar dear,
As courteous, kind, and true;
Fair Florence said her chevalier
Could every foe subdue.

[1] Imitated from the Fabliau, *De Florance et de Blanche Flor, alias Jugement d'Amour.*

And Florence scorned the bookworm vain,
Who sword nor spear could raise;
And Blanchflor scorned the unlettered brain
Could sing no lady's praise.

From dearest love, the maidens bright
To deadly hatred fell;
Each turned to shun the other's sight,
And neither said farewell.

The king of birds, who held his court
Within that flowery grove,
Sang loudly: 'Twill be rare disport
To judge this suit of love.'

Before him came the maidens bright,
With all his birds around,
To judge the cause, if clerk or knight
In love be worthiest found.

The falcon and the sparrow-hawk
Stood forward for the fight:
Ready to do, and not to talk,
They voted for the knight.

And Blanchflor's heart began to fail,
Till rose the strong-voiced lark,
And, after him, the nightingale,
And pleaded for the clerk.

The nightingale prevailed at length,
Her pleading had such charms;
So eloquence can conquer strength,
And arts can conquer arms.

The lovely Florence tore her hair,
And died upon the place;
And all the birds assembled there,
Bewailed the mournful case.

They piled up leaves and flowerets rare,
Above the maiden bright,
And sang: 'Farewell to Florence fair,
Who too well loved her knight.'

Several others of the party sang in the intervals of the dances. Mr. Chainmail handed to Mr. Trillo another ballad of the twelfth century, of a merrier character than the former. Mr. Trillo readily accommodated it with an air, and sang,—

THE PRIEST AND THE MULBERRY TREE [1]

Did you hear of the curate who mounted his mare,
And merrily trotted along to the fair?
Of creature more tractable none ever heard,
In the height of her speed she would stop at a word;
And again with a word, when the curate said Hey,
She put forth her mettle, and galloped away.

As near to the gates of the city he rode,
While the sun of September all brilliantly glowed,
The good priest discovered, with eyes of desire,
A mulberry tree in a hedge of wild briar;
On boughs long and lofty, in many a green shoot,
Hung large, black, and glossy, the beautiful fruit.

The curate was hungry and thirsty to boot;
He shrunk from the thorns, though he longed for the fruit;
With a word he arrested his courser's keen speed,
And he stood up erect on the back of his steed;
On the saddle he stood, while the creature stood still,
And he gathered the fruit, till he took his good fill.

'Sure never,' he thought, 'was a creature so rare,
So docile, so true, as my excellent mare.
Lo, here, how I stand' (and he gazed all around).
'As safe and as steady as if on the ground,
Yet how had it been, if some traveller this way,
Had, dreaming no mischief, but chanced to cry Hey?'

He stood with his head in the mulberry tree,
And he spoke out aloud in his fond reverie:
At the sound of the word, the good mare made a push,
And down went the priest in the wild-briar bush.
He remembered too late, on his thorny green bed,
Much that well may be thought, cannot wisely be said.

[1] Imitated from the Fabliau, *Du Provoire qui mengea des Môres.*

Lady Clarinda, being prevailed on to take the harp in her turn, sang the following stanzas :—

In the days of old,
Lovers felt true passion,
Deeming years of sorrow
By a smile repaid.
Now the charms of gold,
Spells of pride and fashion,
Bid them say good morrow
To the best-loved maid.

Through the forests wild,
O'er the mountains lonely,
They were never weary
Honour to pursue :
If the damsel smiled
Once in seven years only,
All their wanderings dreary
Ample guerdon knew.

Now one day's caprice
Weighs down years of smiling,
Youthful hearts are rovers,
Love is bought and sold :
Fortune's gifts may cease,
Love is less beguiling ;
Wiser were the lovers,
In the days of old.

The glance which she threw at the Captain, as she sang the last verse, awakened his dormant hopes. Looking round for his rival, he saw that he was not in the hall ; and, approaching the lady of his heart, he received one of the sweetest smiles of their earlier days.

After a time, the ladies, and all the females of the party, retired. The males remained on duty with punch and wassail, and dropped off one by one into sweet forgetfulness ; so that when the rising sun of December looked through the painted windows on mouldering embers and flickering

lamps, the vaulted roof was echoing to a mellifluous concert of noses, from the clarionet of the waiting-boy at one end of the hall, to the double bass of the Reverend Doctor, ringing over the empty punch-bowl, at the other.

CONCLUSION

From this eventful night, young Crotchet was seen no more on English mould. Whither he had vanished, was a question that could no more be answered in his case than in that of King Arthur, after the battle of Camlan. The great firm of Catchflat and Company figured in the Gazette and paid sixpence in the pound; and it was clear that he had shrunk from exhibiting himself on the scene of his former greatness, shorn of the beams of his paper prosperity. Some supposed him to be sleeping among the undiscoverable secrets of some barbel-pool in the Thames; but those who knew him best were more inclined to the opinion that he had gone across the Atlantic, with his pockets full of surplus capital, to join his old acquaintance, Mr. Touchandgo, in the bank of Dotandcarryone-town.

Lady Clarinda was more sorry for her father's disappointment than her own; but she had too much pride to allow herself to be put up a second time in the money-market; and when the Captain renewed his assiduities, her old partiality for him, combining with a sense of gratitude for a degree of constancy which she knew she scarcely deserved, induced her, with Lord Foolincourt's hard-wrung consent, to share with him a more humble, but less precarious fortune, than that to which she had been destined as the price of a rotten borough.

THE END.

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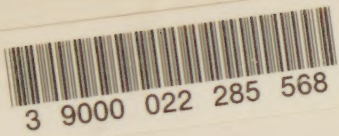

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